



QUEENS OF OLD SPAIN

MARTIN HUME






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Queens of Old Spain

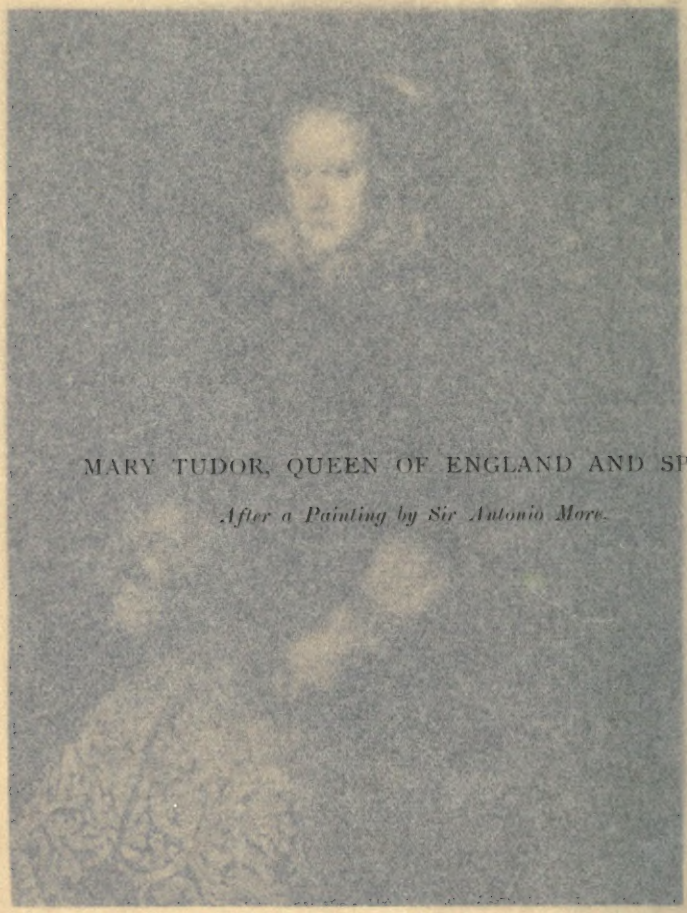
BY

MARTIN HUME

EDITOR OF THE CALENDARS OF SPANISH STATE PAPERS
LECTURER IN SPANISH HISTORY AND LITERATURE

ILLUSTRATED

LONDON
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PUBLISHERS



MARY TUDOR, QUEEN OF ENGLAND AND SPAIN.

After a Painting by Sir Antonio More.

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TO THE SEVERE BUT HONEST PUBLIC

THE books left by a man whose every thought was about books, are even more himself than were his actions during life. In fact, at times, I think it is the case with all who write; for, after all, what a man writes is really far more important than anything he does.

Most of us in wandering through a churchyard where we come upon a friend's name, on a tombstone, feel a spirit of revolt. It is no good to tell us death is as natural as life. We all know that, and still feel that in some strange way we have been defrauded by the death of a dear friend. Nothing is more unjust than is a natural cause.

Even the Greeks, with all their joyousness, must have felt this when they invented Nemesis.

We Caledonians, who took our faith from Hippo (nane o' yer Peters, gie me Paul), perhaps stand up against the stabs of Fate better than those nurtured in the most damnable doctrine of freewill. Once allow it, and life becomes a drunken whirligig on which sit grave and reverend citizens playing on penny whistles, all attired in black.

If though the name upon the tombstone strikes a chill to the heart, half of regret and half of fear—for what, when all is said and done, is your *memento mori* but blue funk?—when we pick up a dead friend's book upon a stall, published at twelve-and-sixpence and ticketed a penny, we must reflect—that is, the

most of us—that to that favour we shall come, and all the pages, that cost us so much thought in the writing, to be tied together with a piece of string and sold with the base trash of Smith and Jones and Brown, fellows who had no style, nor knew the difference betwixt invention and imagination, humour or wit, and did not know a colophon from an illuminated capital, and sold all in a lot.

Therefore I am glad that this edition of one of Hume's best works is coming out, and I who saw him laid to rest in the dry, marly earth of that drear East End cemetery only a year ago—or was it ten, for when a man is dead time ceases for him and for ourselves in thinking of him—am writing these few lines to do my best to keep his memory green.

His 'Queens of Spain' was one of the books that he liked best.

Some say an author always likes his weakest book, but, even if he does, what does it matter? A mother not infrequently adores the least desirable of all her sons, but the world judges him; and she who bore him has to submit to all its judgments of her well-beloved, just as the author has to bow the head to what it says about his books.

Hume was a man who valued what the public said about his work. I used to fancy him, as a good gladiator, some Roman citizen who for his debts, or some cause or another, was forced to live by push of sword, and took it up in the same spirit in which my friend took up the pen, and set about to write.

Such a man, I fancy, fighting of course like Tybalt, by the book of arithmetic, would feel a pride in dying well. Just as he fell, despatched by some rude Dacian who in his life had never come within the

walls of any fencing school, he would wrap his mantle round him decently, and murmur: 'Civis Romanus sum,' as he lay dying in the dust.

These kind of men are never vanquished. Even if they die, their death serves as an example to the world, and makes boys miserable at school who have to put it into Greek hexameters.

Hume was of these good gladiators and passed laborious days. How many reams of paper he must have filled; how many miles of writing he must have traced in his hard-working life, only himself could have been sure of, and perhaps not he, for who shall say if a silkworm measures the length of silk that comes from the cocoon.

When in a music hall I see a man do something easily which seems impossible, I always think upon the hours he must have passed—missing, remissing, perspiring, cursing, and at last see him successful, and then no matter how respectable my neighbours in the stalls appear, or tight my gloves are, clap with a will. Noise, after all, is the reward, perhaps the sole reward, that we accord success.

A modest modicum was all Hume had to show for a self-denying life spent—that is to say, for the last twenty years of it—in burrowing in archives and writing ceaselessly upon the facts he found.

Most certainly he lived the simple life. Up early in the morning, he used to begin writing just as a mill horse turns round in a mill. Three or four thousand lines by tea-time, and then perhaps he would review a book. Then twice a week (no more) he used to walk down to the club, dine simply, and sit reading till it was time to walk back home, to sleep and rise again to work.

With almost lightning speed he wrote, so that, when once he had his facts, nothing remained but the material labour of the pen.

'Martin fa presto' I used to call him, and certainly, considering how much he wrote, the level he maintained was high; not perhaps in the vein of Hallam or of Robertson, but then in history there are many bypaths, and along them he strayed. Sometimes a ramble in a country lane is better than a tramp upon the Great North Road.

I like to fancy that in the Record Office, at Simancas, Brussels, and in the Archives of the Indies (that great red pile, in Seville), there are some old librarians who remember him, and talk about his work. I hear them say, at Seville or Simancas, 'There was an Englishman who used to come here, one who spoke Christian. He used to sit and write, and knew the documents better than we ourselves' (which was not difficult). 'I tell you that that Englishman was like a devil at his work.'

If they exist, and Hume could hear of them, I am certain he would smile in his grave way and say: 'Ah, yes; old Don Saturino Lopez, or Don Eustaquio Perez,' as the case might be, 'I well remember him. He never knew where to find anything; he came from Coria, I think.'

R. B. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM.

INTRODUCTION

In a previous volume I have remarked upon the extremely small political significance of most of the Queens Consort of England, although socially the country has become what it is mainly through feminine influence. In Spain the exact reverse has happened, and in no Christian country has the power of women been less formative of the life and character of the nation, whilst, largely owing to personal and circumstantial accident, the share of ladies in deciding the political destinies of the country from the throne has been more conspicuous than in other European monarchies. The oriental traditions dominant in Spain for centuries tended to make wives the humble satellites rather than the equal companions of their husbands; and the inflated gallantry, before marriage at least, that sprang from the chivalrous obsession grafted upon mixed feudal and Islamic ideals, affected to exclude woman from the harder facts of existence, and from the practical problems that occupied the minds of men. But whilst these traditions limited the power of Spanish women generally, they were insufficient to counteract the extraordinary political influence of a series of remarkable feminine personalities who, mainly owing to feebleness and ineptitude of consorts, or to long minorities of sons, have on occasion during the course of four centuries practically wielded the sceptres of Spain. It is true that queens regnant in England as well as in Spain have usually, and quite naturally,

been powerful political factors, but in most instances they necessarily differed but little, either in aims or methods, from male sovereigns. The difference between the queens of the two countries is most remarkable in the case of queens consort, who in Spain have, either as wives or widowed regents, influenced government to an extent quite unparalleled in England. Apart from the accident of forceful personal character, or other influential qualities possessed by some of these ladies, the reason for their importance must be sought in the fact that most of them represented great dynastic interests or national alliances, and were supported by powerful parties in Spain or abroad. In order that their lives should be properly understood, it will be necessary to keep in view contemporary events in other parts of Europe which more or less concerned them ; and to relate the history of all the Queens of Spain upon such a plan would exceed the capacity of a single volume and the patience of the ordinary reader. It is proposed, therefore, to select for treatment only the lives of some of the Queens of Spain who, for their greatness, their political significance, their attractions, or their misfortunes, stand forth most prominently in the romantic history of their country. The temptation is great to dwell upon certain of the earlier Queens of the small kingdoms which constituted Spain before the union of the crowns: to tell the heroic story of the great Berengaria, the mother of St. Ferdinand, and those of Queen Maria de Molina and Blanche of Bourbon; to recount the matrimonial vagaries of Peter the Cruel, and dwell upon Catharine of Lancaster, whose marriage with the heir of Castile closed the war of succession to the Castilian crowns waged by her father John of Gaunt. She, especially, stands forth with almost photographic

precision in the pages of the genius who penned the chronicles of her time. Gigantic in size she seemed to the more diminutive Spaniard: florid, fat, and fair; a vast eater and drinker, whose valiant prowess at the festal board astounded the abstemious people amongst whom she lived; strong and masculine, but idle, and careless of the feminine arts by which woman's attraction is increased; ruled by her favourites, but withal a good woman and a good Queen, who governed Spain honestly for ten years, during the minority of her weak son, John II. of Castile.

But, interesting as some of these earlier personages are, they cannot rightly be called Queens of Spain; and the first of all Spanish Queens, the great Isabel of Castile and Aragon, may fittingly begin the volume, which will contain the stories of other ladies perhaps more lovable, more feminine, more sympathetic, but none so splendidly steadfast, so noble of aim, or so strong as she. Her function in the world, aided by her husband, was to crush the rieving nobles, and bring unity to Spain by religious exaltation. The end endowed her country with transient greatness and febrile force, whilst the methods by which it was attained doomed the nation she loved so well to a long agony of decay, and ultimate exhaustion. The problems facing Spanish rulers thenceforward were no longer centred upon the development of the country as a prosperous Christian land, or even upon the maintenance of the Mediterranean as a Christian sea. The policy of the 'Catholic Kings' plunged Spain into the vortex of mid-European politics at the critical period of the world's history, when new lines of demarcation were being scored by religious schism across the ancient boundaries: when deep, unbridgable crevasses

were being split between peoples hitherto bound together by common interests and traditional friendship. At this crucial time, when the centre of all earthly authority was boldly challenged, Spain was pledged by Isabel and Ferdinand to a course which thenceforward made her the champion of an impossible religious unity, and squandered for centuries the blood and treasure of her people in the fruitless struggle to fix enduring fetters upon the thoughts and souls of men. Myriads of martyrs shed their blood to cement the solid Spain that might serve as an instrument for such gigantic ends; and the ecstatic Queen, though gentle and pitiful at heart, yet had no pity for the victims, as her clear eyes pierced the reek of sacrifice, and saw beyond it the shining glory of her goal. To her and to her descendant kings the end they aimed at justified all things done in its attainment, and the touch of mystic madness that in the great Queen was allied to exalted genius, grew in those of her blood who followed her to the besotted obsession that blinded them to the nature and extent of the forces against them, and led them down at last to babbling idiocy, and their country to impotent decay. The pale figure of Joan the distraught flits across our page, and forces to our consideration once more the awful problem of whether she was the victim of a hellish conspiracy on the part of those who should have loved her best, or a woman afflicted by the hand of God; whether her lifelong martyrdom was the punishment of heresy or the need of her infirmity. Pathetic Mary Tudor, Queen Consort of Spain, demands notice because her marriage with Philip II. marked the vital need of Spain, at any cost, to hold by the traditional alliance with England amidst the shifting sands of religious revolt which were to

overwhelm and transform Europe; whilst, later, the desperate attempt of Philip to form a new group of powers which should enable Spain to dispense with unorthodox England, is personified in the sweet and noble figure of his third wife, Isabel of Valois, upon whose life-story, poignant enough in its bare reality, romancers have embroidered so many strange adornments. The Austrian princesses, who in turn became consorts of the Catholic Kings, all represent the unhappy persistence of the rulers of Spain in clinging to the splendid but unrealisable dream bequeathed by their great ancestor the Emperor to his suffering realm; that of perpetuating Spanish hegemony over Europe by means of compulsory uniformity of creed, dictated from Rome and enforced from Madrid. And in the intervals of discouragement and disillusionment at the impotence of Hadsburg Emperors to secure such uniformity even within the bounds of the empire itself, and the patent impossibility for Spain alone to cope with the giant task, we see the turning of kings and ministers in temporary despair towards the secular enemy of the house of Austria, and Spain in search of French brides who might bring Catholic support to the Catholic champion. When, at last, exhausted Spain could deceive herself no longer, and was fain to acknowledge that she had been beaten in her attempt to hold the rising tide and deny to men the God-given right of unfettered thought, the matrimonial alliances of her Kings, whilst ceasing to be instruments for the realisation of the vision of her prime, still obeyed the traditionary policies which drew Spain alternately to the side of France or Austria. But the end of such efforts now was not to serve Spanish objects, wise or otherwise, but to snatch advantage for the rival birds of prey who were hovering

over the body of a great nation in the throes of dissolution, ravening for a share of her substance when the hour of death should strike. Sordid and pathetic as the story of these intrigues may be in their political aspect, the personal share in them of the Queens Consort themselves, their methods, their triumphs and their failures, are often fraught with intense interest to the student of manners. The life of the unscrupulous Mariana of Austria, who in the interests of her house held Spain so long in the name of her imbecile son, and in her turn was outwitted by Don Juan and the French interest, presents us with a picture of the times so intimate, thanks to the plentiful material left behind by a self-conscious age, as to introduce us into the innermost secrets of the intrigues to an extent that contemporaries would have thought impossible. And again the sad, but very human, story of the young half-English Princess, bright and light-hearted, torn from brilliant Paris to serve French interests, as the wife of Mariana's half-witted son Charles II., only to beat herself to death against the bars of her gloomy golden cage and break her heart to old Mariana's undisguised joy, throws a flood of lurid light upon Spanish society in its decadence, and proves the baseness to which human ambition will stoop. More repugnant is the career of poor Marie Louise's German successor as the Consort of the miserable Charles the Bewitched in his last years, and the tale of the extraordinary series of plots woven by the rival parties around the lingering deathbed of the King, whom they worried and frightened into his grave, a senile dotard at forty. Only briefly dealt with here are the Queens of the Bourbon renascence, stout little Marie Louise of Savoy, and the forceful termagant Isabel Farnese, who, chosen to

serve as a humble instrument of others, at once seized whip and reins herself, and drove Spain as she listed during a long life of struggle for the aggrandisement of her sons, in which Europe was kept at strife for years by the ambition of one woman.

These and other Queens Consort will pass before us in the following pages, some of them good, a few bad, and most of them unhappy. There is no desire to dwell especially upon the sad and gloomy features of their history, or to represent them all as victims; but it must not be forgotten, in condonation of the shortcomings of some of them, that they were sent from their own homes, kin, and country, often mere children, to a distant foreign court, where the traditional etiquette was appallingly austere and repellent; sacrificed in loveless marriage to men whom they had never seen; treated as emotionless pawns in the game of politics played by crafty brains. No wonder, then, that girlish spirits should be crushed, that young hearts should break in despair, or, as an alternative, should cast to the winds all considerations of honour, duty, and dignity, and seek enjoyment before extinction came. Some of them passed through the fiery ordeal triumphant, and stand forth clear and shining. Great Isabel herself, another more colourless Isabel, the Emperor's wife, a third, Isabel of the Peace, most beloved of Spanish Queens, and Anne her successor, as solemn Philip's wife. Of these no word of reproach may justly be said, nor of Margaret, the Austrian consort of Philip III., nor of the spirited Isabel of Bourbon, daughter of the gay and gallant Béarnais, and sister of Henriette Marie of England. These and others bore their burden bravely to the last; and of the few who cast theirs down, and strayed amongst the poisoned

flowers by the way, it may be truly urged that the trespasses of others against them were greater than their own transgressions. Such of their stories as are here told briefly are set forth with an honest desire to attain accuracy in historical fact and impartiality in deduction therefrom. There has been no desire to make either angels or devils of the personages described. They were, like the rest of their kind, human beings, with mixed and varying motives, swayed by personal and political influences which must be taken into account in any attempt to appraise their characters or understand their actions. Several of the lives are here told in English for the first time by the light of modern research, and in cases where statements are at variance with usually accepted English teaching, references are given in footnotes to the contemporary source from which the statements are derived. The opening of the archives of several European countries, and the extensive reproduction in print of interesting historical texts in Spain of late years, provide much of the new material used in the present work; and the labours of recent English, French, and Spanish historians have naturally been placed under contribution for such fresh facts as they have adduced. Where this is the case, acknowledgment is made in the form of footnotes.

MARTIN HUME.

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BOOK I

ISABEL THE CATHOLIC

CHAPTER I

PROUDLY reared upon a lofty cliff above the trickling Manzanares, there stood the granite palace that had gradually grown around the ancient Moorish fortress of Madrid. Like an eagle from its aerie, its tiny windows blinked across the tawny plain at the far off glittering snow peaks of Guadarrama, standing forth clear and sharp against a cobalt sky. The Alcazar had been the scene of many strange happenings in the past; and for a hundred years chivalric splendour had run riot in its broad patios, with their arcades of slender columns, and in its tapestried halls, whose carved ceilings blazed with gold and colour. Frivolous, pleasure-loving, Juan II. of Castile, grandson of John of Gaunt, had through a long reign outdone in vain ostentation the epic poems and romances of chivalry that filled his brain, and he himself, with his attendant Nubian lion slouching by his side, had stalked through the Alcazar upon the cliff, a figure more picturesque than that of Amadis or Arthur. His lavish, easy-going son, Henry IV., had followed in his footsteps, and had made his palace of Madrid a home of dissolute magnificence and humiliating debauchery, unexampled even in that age of general decadence.

But rarely had scenes at once so pregnant of evil, and yet so ostensibly joyous, been enacted in the palace of Madrid as on the 17th March 1462. Greed, hate and jealousy, raged beneath silken gowns and ermine

mantles; nay, beneath the gorgeous vestments of the great churchmen who stood grouped before the altar in the palace chapel, though smiling faces and words of pleasure were seen and heard on every side. For to the King, after eight years of fruitless marriage, an heiress had been born, and the court and people of Castile and Leon were bidden to make merry and welcome their future Queen. Bull fights, tournaments, and cane contests, the songs of minstrels and plenteous banquets, had for days beguiled a populace palled with gaudy shows; and now the sacred ceremonies of the Church were to sanctify the babe whose advent had moved so many hearts to shocked surprise. The King, a shaggy, red-haired giant with slack, lazy limbs and feeble face, towered in his golden crown and velvet mantle over his nine-year-old half-brother Alfonso by his side. The child, under a canopy, was borne in state up to the font by Count Alba de Liste, and the stalwart, black-browed primate of Spain, Alfonso Carrillo, Archbishop of Toledo, who, with three attendant bishops, performed the ceremony, blessed the baby girl unctuously beneath the King's lymphatic gaze, though he had already resolved to ruin her. By the side of the font stood the sponsors: a girl of eleven and a sturdy noble in splendid attire, with his wife. All around, the courtiers, their mouths wreathed in doubtful smiles which their lifted brows belied, glanced alternately at the little group of sponsors, and at the noblest figure of all the courtly throng: a young man glittering with gems who stood behind the King. Tall, almost, as Henry himself, with flashing dark eyes and jet black hair, a fair skin and gallant mien, this youth formed with the King, and the group at the font, the elements of a great drama, which ended in the

renascence of Spain. For the young man was Beltran de la Cueva, the new Count of Ledesma, who, all the court was whispering, was really the father of the new-born Princess, and the sponsors, besides the Frenchman Armignac, were the gorged and spoiled favourite of the King, the all-powerful Juan Pacheco, Marquis of Villena, and his wife, and the King's half-sister, Princess Isabel of Castile. The girl had seen nothing of court life, for up to this time, from her orphaned babyhood, she had lived with her widowed mother and younger brother in neglected retirement at the lone castle of Arevalo, immersed in books and the gentle arts that modest maids were taught; but she went through her part of the ceremony composedly, and with simple dignity. She was already tall for her age, with a fair, round face, large, light blue eyes, and the reddish hair of her Plantagenet ancestors; and if she, in her innocence, guessed at some of the tumultuous passions that were silently raging around her, she made no sign, and bore herself calmly, as befitted the daughter of a long line of kings.[1]

Seven weeks afterwards, on the 9th May, in the great hall of the palace, the nobles, prelates, and deputies of the chartered towns met to swear allegiance to the new heiress of Castile. One by one, as they advanced to kneel and kiss the tiny hand of the unconscious infant, they frowned and whispered beneath their breath words of scorn and indignation which they dared not utter openly, for all around, and thronging the corridors and courtyards, there stood with ready lances the Morisco bodyguard of the King, eager to punish disobedience. And so, though the insulting

[1] The ceremony is described by Enriquez de Castillo in the contemporary 'Cronica de Enrique IV.'

nickname of the new Infanta Juana, *the Beltraneja*, after the name of her assumed father, passed from mouth to mouth quietly, public protest there was none.[1]

Already before the birth of the hapless *Beltraneja*, the scandal of Henry's life, his contemptible weakness and the acknowledged sexual impotence which had caused his divorce from his first wife, had made his court a battle ground for rival ambitions. Like the previous Kings of his house, which was raised to the throne by a fratricidal revolution, and himself a rebel during his father's lifetime, Henry IV. had lavished crown gifts upon noble partisans to such an extent as to have reduced his patrimony to nought. Justice was openly bought and sold, permanent grants upon public revenues were bartered for small ready payments, law and order were non-existent outside the strong walls of the fortified cities, and the whole country was a prey to plundering nobles, who, either separately or in "leagues," tyrannised and robbed as they listed.[2] Feudalism had never been strong in the realms of Castile, because the frontier nobles, who for centuries pushed back gradually the Moorish power, always had to depend upon conciliating the towns they occupied, in order that the new regime might be more welcome than the one displaced. The germ of institutions in Spain had ever been the municipality, not the village grouped around the castle or the abbey as in England, and the soldier noble in Spain, unlike the English or German baron, had to win the support of townsmen, not to dispose of agricultural

[1] Hernando de Pulgar, 'Cronica de los Reyes Catolicos.'

[2] Letter of Diego de Valera to Henry IV. MS. quoted by Amador de las Rios. Historia de Madrid. See also the famous poems of the time, Coplas de Mingo Revulgo, and Coplas del Provincial, where vivid pictures are given of the prevailing anarchy.

serfs. But when the Moors in Spain had been reduced to impotence, and a series of weak kings had been raised to the throne as the puppets of nobles; then when feudalism was dying elsewhere, it attempted to raise its head in Spain, capturing the government of towns on the one hand and beggaring and dominating the King on the other. By the time of which we are now speaking, the process was well nigh complete; and the only safeguard against the absolute tyranny of the nobles, was their mutual greed and jealousy.

For years Juan Pacheco, Marquis of Villena, had ruled the King with a rod of iron. The grants and gifts he had extorted for himself and his friends made him more powerful than any other force in the land. But there were those who sulked apart from him, nobles, some of them, of higher lineage and greater hereditary territories than his; and when the handsome foot page, Beltran de la Cueva, captured the good graces of the King and his gay young Portuguese wife, Queen Juana, the enemies of Villena saw in the rising star an instrument by which he might be humbled. After the Beltraneja's birth and christening, honours almost royal were piled upon Beltran de la Cueva; and Villena and his uncle, Alfonso Carrillo, Archbishop of Toledo, grew ever more indignant and discontented. Only a fortnight after the Cortes had sworn allegiance to the new Princess, Villena drew up a secret protest against the act, alleging the illegitimacy of the child,[1] and soon open opposition to King and favourite was declared.

There is no space here to relate in detail the

[1] The protest is in the archives of Villena's descendant, the present Duke of Frias, to whom I am indebted for an abstract of it.

complicated series of intrigues and humiliations that followed. The King on one occasion was forced to hide in his own palace from the assaulting soldiery of Villena. To buy the goodwill of the jealous favourite towards his little daughter he went so far as to agree to a marriage between the Beltraneja and Villena's son;[1] and more humiliating still, in December 1464, he consented to the inquiry of a commission of churchmen nominated by Villena and his friends, to inquire into the legitimacy of his reputed daughter. The inquiry elicited much piquant but entirely contradictory evidence as to the virility of the King, who, it was admitted on all hands, delighted in the society of ladies, and aroused the violent jealousy of the Queen; but, although with our present lights there seems to have been no valid reason for disinheriting the princess, the commission was sufficiently in doubt to recommend the King to make the best terms he could with the rebels. The King's sister, Princess Isabel, who at the time lived at Court, was also used as an instrument by Henry to pacify the league against him. She had been betrothed when quite a child at Arevalo to Prince Charles of Viana, eldest son of the King of Aragon, and in right of his mother himself King of Navarre; a splendid match which, failing issue from Henry and from her younger brother Alfonso, might have led to the union of all Spain in one realm. But Charles of Viana had already in 1461 fallen a victim to the hate and jealousy of his stepmother, Juana Enriquez, daughter of a great Castilian noble, Don Fadrique, the Admiral of the

[1] The origin . treaty, which of course came to nothing, is in the Frias Archives, and s signed by Louis XI. as one of the contracting parties. It is dated 9th May 1463. I have not seen the fact stated elsewhere.

realm, and Isabel became to her brother a valuable diplomatic asset. Before the storm of war burst Henry attempted to wed his sister to Alfonso v. of Portugal, his wife's brother, and so to prevent her claims to the Castilian crown being urged to the detriment of the Beltraneja; but the match had no attraction for the clever cautious girl of thirteen; for the suitor was middle-aged and ugly, and already her own genius or crafty councillors had suggested to her the husband who would best serve her own interests. So she gravely reminded her brother that she, a Castilian princess, could not legally be bestowed in marriage without the formal ratification of the Cortes.

In September 1564 Beltran de la Cueva received the great rank of Master of Santiago, which endowed him not only with vast revenues, but the disposal of an armed force second to none in the kingdom, and this new folly of the King was the signal for revolt. A party of nobles immediately seized Valladolid against the King, and though the townspeople promptly expelled them and proclaimed the loyalty of the city, the issue between the factions was now joined. On the following day, 16th September, an attempt that nearly succeeded was made to capture and kidnap the King himself near Segovia. He was a poor, feeble-minded creature, hating strife and danger, and, though some of his stronger councillors protested against such weakness, he consented to meet the revolted nobles, and redress their grievances. In October Villena, the Archbishop of Toledo, Count Benavente, the Admiral Don Fadrique, and the rest of the rebels, met Henry between Cabezon and Cigales, and in three interviews, during their stay of five weeks,

dictated to the wretched King their demands.[1] The King was to dismiss his Moorish guard and become a better Christian: he was to ask for no more money without the consent of the nobles, to deprive Cueva of the Mastership of Santiago, recognise his own impotence and the bastardy of his daughter, and acknowledge as his heir his half-brother Alfonso, whom he was to deliver to the guardianship of Villena. On the 30th November the nobles and the King took the oath to hold the boy Alfonso as the heir of Spain; and then Henry, a mere cypher thenceforward, sadly wended his way to Segovia, where the commission to inquire into the shameful question of his virility was still sitting,[2] and Villena and his uncle, the warlike Archbishop, were thus practically the rulers of Spain. But though Henry consented to everything he characteristically tried to avoid the spirit of the agreement. Beltran de la Cueva was deprived of the Mastership of Santiago, but he was made Duke of Alburquerque in exchange for the loss, and the poor little disinherited Beltraneja was treated with greater consideration than before.

When civil war was seen to be inevitable in the spring of 1465, Henry carried his wife and child with his sister Isabel to Salamanca, whilst the Archbishop

[1] The text of the demands, under thirty-nine heads, will be found in the 'Documentos Ineditos,' vol. xiv. p. 369.

[2] The exact sequence and dates of these and the following events have never yet been made clear in any of the numerous histories of the time, not even in Prescott, owing to the fact that Enriquez de Castillo and Pulgar very rarely give dates, whilst Galindez only mentions the years of such happenings as he records. The printing of the contemporary so-called 'Cronicon de Valladolid' (partly written by Isabel's physician, Dr. Toledo) in the 'Documentos Ineditos,' now enables us to set forth the events chronologically, and thus the better to understand their significance.

of Toledo, in the name of the revolted nobles, seized the walled city of Avila, where within a few days he was joined by Villena and his friends, bringing with them the Infante Alfonso, who, in pursuance of the agreement made with the King at Cigales, had received the oath of allegiance as heir to the crown. From the King it was clear that the nobles could hope for no more, for he had summoned the nation to arms to oppose them; but from a child King of their own making, rich grants could still be wrung, and for the first time since the dying days of the Gothic monarchy, the sacredness of the anointed Sovereign of Castile was mocked and derided. In April 1565, at Plascencia, the nobles swore secretly to hold Alfonso as King; and on the 5th June 1564, on a mound within sight of the walls of Avila, the public scene was enacted that shocked Spain like a sacrilege. Upon a staging there was seated a lay figure in mourning robes, with a royal crown upon its head; a sword of state before it, and in the hand a sceptre. A great multitude of people with bated breath awaited the living actors in the scene; and soon there issued from the city gate a brilliant cavalcade of nobles and bishops, headed by Villena escorting the little prince Alfonso. Arriving before the scaffolding, and in mockery saluting the figure, most of the nobles mounted the platform, whilst Villena, the Master of Alcantara, and Count Medillin, with a bodyguard, conveyed the Infante to a coign of vantage some distance away. Then in a loud voice was read upon the platform the impeachment of the King, which was summed up under four heads. For the first, it ran, Henry of Castile is unworthy to enjoy the regal dignity; and as the tremendous words were read the Archbishop of Toledo stepped forth and tore

the royal crown from the brows of the lifeless doll: for the second, he is unfit to administer justice in the realm, and the Count of Plascencia removed the sword of state from its place: for the third, no rule or government should be entrusted to him, and Count of Benavente took from the figure's powerless grasp the sceptre which it held: for the fourth, he should be deprived of the throne and the honour due to kings, whereupon Don Diego Lopez de Zuñiga cast the dummy down and trampled it under foot, amidst the jeers and curses of the crowd. When this was done, and the platform cleared, young Alfonso was raised aloft in the arms of men that all might see, and a great shout went up of "*Castilla, Castilla, for the King Don Alfonso,*" and then, seated on the throne, the boy gave his hand to kiss to those who came to pay their new sovereign fealty. Like wildfire across the steppes and mountains of Castile sped the awful news, and Henry in Salamanca was soon surrounded by hosts of subjects whose reverence for a sacrosanct King had been wounded by what they regarded as impious blasphemy.

Both factions flew to arms, and for months civil war raged, the walled cities being alternately besieged and captured by both parties. Isabel herself remained with the King, usually at Segovia or Madrid; though with our knowledge of her character and tastes, she can have had little sympathy with the tone of her brother's court. At one time during the lingering struggle in 1466, Henry endeavoured to win Villena and his family from the side of rebellion by betrothing Isabel to Don Pedro Giron, Master of Calatrava, Villena's brother. The suitor was an uncouth boor, and that an Infanta of Castile should be sacrificed in marriage with an upstart such as he was too much for

Isabel's pride and great ambition. Nothing in the world, she said, should bring her to such a humiliation; though the King, careless of her protests, petitioned the Pope to dispense Don Pedro from his pledge of celibacy as Master of a monkish military order. Isabel's faithful friend, Doña Beatriz Bobadilla, wife of Andres Cabrera, High Steward of the King, and Commander of the fortress of Segovia, was as determined as her mistress that the marriage should not take place, and swore herself to murder Don Pedro, if necessary, to prevent it. A better way was found than by Dona Beatriz's dagger, for when the papal dispensation arrived, and the prospective bridegroom set out in triumph to claim his bride, poison cut short his career as soon as he left his home. Whether Isabel herself was an accomplice of the act will never be known. She probably would not have hesitated to sanction it in the circumstances, according to the ethics of the time; for she never flinched, as her brother did, at inflicting suffering for what she considered necessary ends.

On the 20th August 1467, the main bodies of both factions met on the historic battlefield of Olmedo, the warlike Archbishop of Toledo, clad in armour covered by a surcoat embroidered with the holy symbols, led into battle the boy pretender Alfonso; whilst the royal favourite, Beltran de la Cueva, now Duke of Alburquerque, on the King's side, matched the valour of the Churchman.[1] Both sides suffered severely, but the pusillanimity of the King caused the fight to be regarded as a defeat for him, and the capture of his royal fortress of Segovia soon afterwards proved his impotence in arms so clearly, that a sort of *modus*

[1] Enriquez de Castillo, 'Cronica de Enrique IV.'

vivendi was arranged, by which for nearly a year each King issued decrees and ostensibly ruled the territories held by his partisans.[1]

At length, in July 1468, the promising young pretender Alfonso died suddenly and mysteriously in his fifteenth year, at Cardeñosa, near Avila; perhaps of plague, as was said at the time, but more probably of poison;[2] and the whole position was at once revolutionised. Isabel had been in the Alcazar of Segovia with her friends the commander and his wife when the city was surrendered to the rebels, and from that time, late in 1567, she had followed the fortunes of Alfonso, with whom she was at his death. She at once retired broken-hearted to the convent of Santa Clara in Avila, but not, we may be certain, unmindful of the great change wrought in her prospects by her brother's premature death. She was nearly seventeen years of age, learned and precocious far beyond her years; the events that had passed around her for the last six years had matured her naturally strong judgment, and there is no doubt from what followed that she had already decided upon her course of action. She was without such affectionate guidance as girls of her age usually enjoy; for her unhappy widowed mother, to whom she was always tender and kind, had already fallen a victim to the hereditary curse of the house of Portugal, to which she belonged, and lived thenceforward in leth-

[1] A number of decrees issued by Alfonso at the time, conferring upon Villena and his partisans great grants and privileges, are in the Frias archives; and other charters rewarding the city of Avila for its adherence to his cause have recently been printed by the Chronicler of the city from its archives, Sr. de Foronda.

[2] Of a poisoned trout which he ate, it was asserted by his partisans. The suspicion of poison is strengthened by the fact that his death was publicly announced as a fact some days before it happened, when he was quite well.

argic insanity in her castle of Arevalo. Isabel's brother the King was her enemy, and she had no other near relative: the churchmen and nobles who had risen against Henry, and were now around her, were, it must have been evident to her, greedy rogues bent really upon undermining the royal power for their own benefit; and deeply devout as Isabel was, she was quite unblinded by the illusion that the Archbishop and bishops who led the revolt were moved to their action by any considerations of morality or religion. On the other hand, the rebellious nobles and ecclesiastics could not persist in their revolt without a royal figure head. Young Alfonso, a mere child, had been an easy tool, and doubtless the leaders thought that this silent, self-possessed damsel would be quite as facile to manage.

They did not have to wait many days for proof to the contrary. The Archbishop of Toledo was the mouthpiece of his associates. Within the venerable walls of the royal convent at Avila he set before Isabel a vivid picture of the evils of her elder brother's rule, his shameful laxity of life, his lavish squandering of the nation's wealth upon unworthy objects, and the admitted illegitimacy of the daughter he wished to make his heiress; and the Archbishop ended by offering to Isabel, in the name of the nobles, the crowns of Castile. The wearer of these crowns, wrested painfully through centuries of struggle from intruding infidels, had always been held sacred. The religious exaltation born of the reconquest had invested the Christian sovereigns in the eyes of their subjects with divine sanction and special saintly patronage. To attack them was not disloyalty alone, but sacrilege; and the deposition of Henry at Avila had, as we have

seen, thrilled Spain with horror. It was no part of Isabel's plan to do anything that might weaken the reverence that surrounded the throne to which she knew now she might succeed. So her answer to the prelate was firm as well as wise. With many sage reflections taken from the didactic books that had always been her study, she declared that she would never accept a crown that was not hers by right. She desired to end the miserable war, she said, and to be reconciled to her brother and sovereign. If the nobles desired to serve her they would not try to make her Queen before her time, but persuade the King to acknowledge her as his heir, since they assured her that the Princess Juana was the fruit of adultery.

At first the nobles were dismayed at an answer that some thought would mean ruin to them. But the Archbishop, Carrillo, knew the weakness of Henry, and whispered to Villena as they descended the convent stairs, that the Infanta's resolve to claim the heirship would mean safety and victory for them. Little did he or the rest of the nobles know the great spirit and iron will of the girl with whom they had to deal. No time was lost in approaching the King. He was ready to agree to anything for a quiet life, and Alburquerque, and even the great Cardinal Mendoza, agreed with him that an accord was advisable; though it might be broken afterwards when the nobles were disarmed. Before the end of August all was settled, and the cities of Castile had sent their deputies to take the oath of allegiance to Isabel as heiress to the crown. A formal meeting was arranged to take place between Henry and his sister at a place called the Venta de los Toros de Guisando, a hostelry famous for some prehistoric stone figures of

undetermined beasts in the neighbourhood. All was amiable on the surface. Henry embraced his sister and promised her his future affection, settling upon her the principality of Asturias and Oviedo, and the cities of Avila, Huete, Medina, and many others, with all revenues and jurisdictions as from the beginning of the revolt (September 1464).[1] But by the agreement Isabel was bound not to marry without the King's consent, and it is evident that to this condition Henry and his friends looked for rendering their concessions voidable.

The intrigues of the two parties of Castile were therefore now centred upon the marriage of the Princess. Suitors were not lacking. If we are to believe Hall, Edward IV. of England, before his marriage with Elizabeth Grey, was approached by the Spaniards, and it is certain that his brother Richard, Duke of Gloucester, was at one time a wooer. Either of them would have suited Henry of Castile, because it would have removed Isabel from Spain. A Portuguese would have also been acceptable to the same party, because Portugal was naturally on the side of the Beltraneja and her Portuguese mother. But Isabel had other views, and the only suitors that were entertained seriously were the Duke of Guienne, the brother of Louis XI., and the young Ferdinand of Aragon, the son and heir of John II. and nephew of

[1] In a series of documents recently published from the archives of the city of Avila by St. Foronda, there is one very curious charter signed by Isabel on 2nd September, before even she started for the interview with her brother. In it she already acts as sovereign of Avila, confirming the many privileges given to the city by her brother Alfonso, whom she calls King, and cancelling the grants of territories belonging to the city which King Henry had made to his follower, the Count of Alba. Thus she annulled the King's grants before he bestowed the city upon her.

the doughty old Admiral of Castile, who had stood by the side of the nobles in their revolt. There was never any doubt as to which of the suitors Isabel favoured. The Frenchman was reported to her as a poor, puny creature with weak legs and watery eyes, whilst Ferdinand, a youth of her own age, was praised to the skies for his manliness, his good looks, and his abilities, by those whose judgment she trusted. It is impossible to say whether Isabel as yet fully understood what such a marriage might mean to Spain; but it is certain that the wicked old John II. of Aragon was quite aware of its advantages for his own realm.

The house of Aragon, with its domains of Sicily and Naples, and its secular ambition towards the east, had found itself everywhere opposed by the growing power of France. The Mediterranean, the seat of empire for centuries, had no finer havens than those under the sceptre of Aragon, but the Catalans were harsh and independent with their kings, and sparing of their money for royal purposes. A poor king of Aragon could not hope, with his own unaided resources, to beat France on the Gulf of Lyons, and bear the red and yellow banner of Barcelona to the infidel Levant. But with the resources in men and money of greater Castile at his bidding, all was possible; and John II., who had not scrupled to murder his first-born son for the benefit of his second, and oust his own children from their mother's realm of Navarre, was ready to go to any lengths to bring about the union which might realise the dream of Aragon.

From Isabel's point of view, too, the match was a good one, apart from personal inclination. There is no doubt whatever that she was, even thus early, determined when her time came to crush the tyrannous

nobles who had reduced Castile to anarchy and the sovereign to a contemptible lay figure. With her great talent she understood that to do this she must dispose of force apart from that afforded by any league of nobles in Castile itself; and she looked towards Aragon to lend her such additional strength. This fact, however, was not lost upon the greedy nobles, especially Villena. The turbulent leader of conspiracy already looked askance at the quiet determined girl who thus early imposed her will upon her followers, and throwing his power again on the side of the king he had once solemnly deposed, he seized the mastership of Santiago as his reward. In a panic at the fear of the Aragonese match, the king and Villena once more agreed to marry Isabel with the king of Portugal, Villena and Cardinal Mendoza being heavily bribed by the Portuguese for their aid.[1] Isabel was at her town of Ocaña at the time, and her position was extremely difficult and perilous when the Portuguese envoys came to her with Villena to offer her their king's hand. As Isabel had several weeks before secretly bound herself to marry Ferdinand of Aragon, her reply was a diplomatic refusal to the Portuguese advances; and Villena, enraged, was disposed to capture her on the spot and carry her a prisoner to Court. Inconvenient princes and princesses were easily removed in those days, and Isabel's danger was great. But she had the faculty of compelling love and admiration; she was as brave as a lion and as cunning as a serpent, and the people of Ocaña made it quite evident to Villena that they would allow no violence to be offered to her. But clearly something must be done to prevent Isabel

[1] The original deed signed by the King of Portugal, dated 2nd May 1469, is in the Frias archives.

from becoming too strong; and as a last resort after her refusal to entertain the Portuguese match it was determined to capture her by force of arms. She was then at Madrigal, and Villena's nephew, the Bishop of Burgos, bribed her servants to desert her in her hour of need: the King sent orders to the townsmen that no resistance was to be offered to his officers; and Cardinal Mendoza with a strong force marched towards Madrigal to arrest Isabel. But another archbishop, more warlike than he, Carrillo of Toledo, was before him. With the Admiral Don Fadrique and a band of horsemen, he swooped down from Leon and bore Isabel to safety amongst those who would have died for her, and entered into the great city of Valladolid after sunset on the 31st August 1469. No time was to be lost. Envoys were sent in disguise hurrying up to Saragossa, to hasten the coming of the bridegroom. The service was a dangerous one; for if Ferdinand had fallen into the hands of the Court party a short shrift would have been his. But the stake was great, and Juan II. of Aragon and his son, young as the latter was, did not stick at trifles. One difficulty, indeed, was overcome characteristically. Isabel was known to be rigidity itself in matters of propriety; and, as she and Ferdinand were second cousins, a papal bull was necessary for the marriage. The Pope, Paul II., was on the side of the Castilian Court, and no bull could be got from him; but Juan II. of Aragon and the Archbishop of Toledo carefully had one forged to satisfy Isabel's scruples.[1]

Whilst one imposing cavalcade of Aragonese bear-

[1] Isabel only learnt of the deception practised upon her some time afterwards (1471) from the partisans of the Beltraneja's projected marriage with the Duke of Guienne. A genuine bull of dispensation was afterwards granted to her by the new Pope, Sixtus IV.

ing rich presents took the high road into Castile and occupied the attention of the King's officers, a modest party of five merchants threaded the mountain paths by Soria, after leaving the Aragonese territory at Tarrazona on the 7th October. The first day after entering Castile they rode well-nigh sixty miles; and late at night the little cavalcade approached the walled town of Osma, where Pedro Manrique and an armed escort were to meet them. The night was black, and their summons at the gates of the town was misunderstood: a cry went up that this was a body of the king's men to surprise the place; and from the ramparts a shower of missiles flew upon the strangers below. One murderous stone whizzed within a few inches of the head of a fair-haired lad of handsome visage and manly bearing, who, as a servant, accompanied those who wore the garb of merchants. It was Ferdinand himself who thus narrowly escaped death, and a hurried explanation, a shouted password, the flashing of torches followed, and then the creaking drawbridge fell, the great gates clanged open, and the danger was over.[1] The next day, with larger forces, Ferdinand reached Dueñas, in Leon, near Valladolid; and four days later, now in raiment that befitted a royal bridegroom, for his father had made him king of Sicily, he rode when most men slept to Valladolid. It was nearly midnight when he arrived, and the gates of the city were closed for the night, but a postern in the walls gave access to the house in which Isabel was lodged; and there the Archbishop of Toledo led him by hand into the presence of his bride, to whom

[1] The story of Ferdinand's coming and his marriage is graphically told in the Decades of Alfonso de Palencia, who had been sent from Isabel to fetch him, and accompanied him on his journey.

he was solemnly betrothed by the Archbishop's chaplain. It was all done so secretly that no inkling of it reached the slumbering town; and within two hours the youth was in the saddle again and reached Dueñas long before dawn.[1]

On the 18th October 1469, four days later, all was ready for the public marriage, and Ferdinand entered the city this time in state, with Castilian and Aragonese men-at-arms and knights around him. Isabel was staying at the best house in Valladolid, that of her partisan, Juan Vivero, and the great hall was richly decked for the occasion of this, one of the fateful marriages of history, though none could have known that it was such at the time. The celebrant was the warlike Archbishop who had been so powerful a factor in bringing it about; and the next day, after mass, the married pair dined in public amidst the rejoicing of the faithful people of Valladolid. There was little pomp and circumstance in the wedding, for the times were critical, the realm disturbed, and money scarce; but imagination is stirred by the recollection of the great consequences that ensued upon it, and those who saw the event, even with their necessarily limited vision of its effects, must have realised that any splendour lavished upon it could not have enhanced its importance.

The news of the dreaded marriage filled the King and his court with dismay. Villena, in close league with Alburquerque and the Mendozas, now espoused the cause of the Beltraneja,[2] who was declared the

[1] 'Cronicon de Valladolid,' a diary kept at Valladolid at the time by Dr. Toledo, Isabel's physician. *Doc. Ined.* 14.

[2] In the Frias archives there is an undertaking, dated 2nd October 1470, signed by the Duke of Guienne, promising rewards to Cardinal Mendoza, the Marquis of Villena, the Duke of Arevalo, and others, for their aid in bringing about the betrothal with the Beltraneja.

legitimate heiress to the Crown, and betrothed to Isabel's former suitor, the Duke of Guienne, in the presence of the assembled nobles, at the monastery of Loyola, near Segovia. It mattered not, apparently, that the very men who now swore fealty to Juana, the hapless Beltraneja, had previously denounced her as a bastard: they wanted a puppet, not a mistress, as Isabel was likely to be, and they were quite ready to perjure themselves in their own interests. Isabel was formally deprived of all her grants and privileges, even of the lordship of her town of Dueñas, near Valladolid;[1] where she and Ferdinand had kept their little court, and where their first child had just been born (October 1470), a daughter, to whom they gave the name of Isabel.

Ferdinand could not remain long in idleness, and was soon summoned by his father to aid him in a war with France, being absent from his wife for over a year, winning fresh experience and credit both as soldier and negotiator. In the meanwhile, things were going badly again for the Beltraneja. Her French betrothed died in May 1472; and some of the nobles, jealous of the greed of Villena, were once more wavering, and making secret approaches to Isabel. She had bold and zealous friends in the Chamberlain Cabrera, who held the strong castle of Segovia, and his wife, Beatriz de Bobadilla.[2] In the last weeks of

[1] Dueñas was granted on the same day, 21st October 1470, to the Princess Doña Juana (the Beltraneja). Cronicon de Valladolid.

[2] How much Isabel prized the fidelity of these steadfast adherents is seen by the last act of her life. On her deathbed she revoked—not very honestly or graciously most people think—all grants and rewards she had given out of crown possessions, on the pretext that she had been moved to make them more by need than by her own wish. The only exception she made was the manors of the Marquisite of Moya, which, with the title, had been granted to Cabrera and his wife Doña Beatriz Bobadilla.

1473, Doña Beatriz and her husband urged Henry to forgive and receive his sister. She was, they told him, being persecuted by the Marquis of Villena, and had meant no harm in her marriage with the man she loved. Henry was doubtful, but Cardinal Mendoza and Count Benavente had changed sides again, and now quietly used their influence in Isabel's favour. A grudging promise was given by the King, but it was enough for Doña Beatriz ; and, disguised as a farmer's wife, she set forth from Segovia on a market pad ; and alone over the snowy roads, hurried to carry the good news to the Princess in the town of Aranda, which had just been surrendered to her by the townsfolk. A few days afterwards, on further advice from Doña Beatriz, Isabel, escorted by the Archbishop of Toledo and his men-at-arms, travelled through the night, and before the first streak of dawn on the 28th December 1473, they were admitted into the Alcazar of Segovia, where no force but treachery could harm her.

Villena's son, who, fearing betrayal, had refused to enter the city when he had come with the King weeks before, and had remained in the neighbourhood at the famous Geronomite monastery of El Parral, founded by his father, fled at the news. His father, with Alburquerque and the Constable of Castile, Count of Haro, at once met at Cuellar, and sent an insolent order to Henry to expel his sister from Segovia. It came too late, however. The King, by this time, had met Isabel, who had received him at the gate of the Alcazar, and professed her love and duty to him. In a speech full of womanly wisdom,[1] she said she had come to pray him to put aside anger towards her, for she meant no evil; and all she asked was that he

[1] Recorded in Enriquez de Castillo's 'Cronica de Enrique IV.'

should fulfil his oath taken at Toros de Guisando, and acknowledge her as heiress of Castile. 'For by the laws of God and man, the succession belonged to her.' Weak Henry swayed from one side to the other like a reed in the wind, as either party had his ear; and at last Isabel took the bold course of sending secretly for Ferdinand, who had just returned from Aragon. The risk was great, but Isabel knew, at least, that she could depend upon the Commander of the Alcazar of Segovia, and Ferdinand secretly entered the fortress on the 4th January 1474. It was a difficult matter for Doña Beatriz to persuade the King to receive his young brother-in-law; but she succeeded at last, and when Henry had consented, he did the thing handsomely, and they all rode together through the city in state, with great show of affection and rejoicing. On Twelfth Day, Doña Beatriz and her husband gave a great banquet to the royal party[1] at the Bishop's palace, between the Alcazar and the Cathedral. Whilst the minstrels were playing in the hall after dinner, the King suddenly fell ill. Violent vomiting and purging seemed to point to poison, and the alarm was great. Prayers and processions continued night and day, and the unfortunate man seemed to recover; but, though he lived for nearly a year longer, he never was well again, the irritation of the stomach continuing incessantly until he sank from weakness.

In the interim both factions interminably worried him to settle the succession. Sometimes he would lean to Isabel's friends, sometimes to Villena and Alburquerque, but Isabel herself, wise and cautious,

[1] It should be mentioned that the faithless Queen of Henry IV., the mother of the Beltraneja, lived apart from him in Madrid. She had several children by various men subsequently.

knew where safety alone for her could be found, and took care not to stir outside the Alcazar of Segovia, in the firm keeping of Cabrera, who himself was in the firm keeping of his wife, Doña Beatriz. Once in the summer it was found that the King had treacherously agreed that Villena's forces should surreptitiously enter the town and occupy the towers of the cathedral, whence they might throw explosives into the Alcazar and capture Isabel on the ground that she was poisoning the King; but the plan was frustrated, and Henry, either in fear or ashamed of his part of the transaction, left Segovia to place himself in the hands of Villena at Cuellar. Greedy to the last, Villena carried the sick King to Estremadura to obtain the surrender of some towns there that he coveted; but to Henry's expressed grief, and the relief of the country, the insatiable favourite died unexpectedly of a malignant gathering in the throat on the way, and the King returned to Madrid, himself a dying man. His worthless life flickered out before dawn on the 12th December 1474, and his last plans were for the rehabilitation of the Beltraneja. He is said to have left a will bequeathing her the succession; but Cardinal Mendoza, Count Benavente, and his other executors, never produced such a document, which, moreover, would have been repudiated now by the nation at large, passionately loyal, as it already mainly was, to Isabel.[1]

[1] Galindez tells the story that Henry on his deathbed swore that Juana was really his child, and says that he left a will in her favour of which Villena was the executor. The latter having predeceased the King, the will remained in the keeping of Oviedo, the King's secretary, who afterwards entrusted it to the curate of Santa Cruz at Madrid. He, fearing to hold it, enclosed it in a chest with other papers and buried it at Almeida, in Portugal. Years afterwards Isabel learnt of this, and when, in 1504,

There was hardly a private or public shortcoming of which Henry in his lifetime had not been accused. From the Sovereign Pontiff to frank, but humble subjects, remonstrances against his notoriously bad conduct had been offered to the wretched King; and at his death the accumulated evils, bred by a line of frivolous monarchs, had reached their climax. There was no justice, order or security for life or property, and the strong oppressed the weak without reproach or hindrance, the only semblance of law being maintained by the larger walled cities in their territories by means of their armed burgess brotherhood. But in the disturbances that had succeeded the birth of the Beltraneja the cities themselves were divided, and in many cases the factions within their own walls made them scenes of bloodshed and insecurity. Faith and religion, that had hitherto been the mainstay of the throne of Castile, had been trampled under foot and oppressed by a monarch whose constant companions and closest servitors had been of the hated brood of Mahomet. Nobles who, for themselves and their adherents, had wrung from the Kings nearly all they had to give, and threatened even to overwhelm the cities, were free from taxation, except the almost obsolete feudal aid in spears which the Sovereign had nominally a right to summon at need. Such men as Villena, or Alvaro de Luna in the previous reign, with more armed followers than the King and greater available wealth, were the real sovereigns of

she was mortally ill, she sent the curate and the lawyer who had told her to disinter the will. When they brought it she was too ill to see it, and it remained in the lawyer's keeping. He informed Ferdinand after the Queen's death, and the King ordered the document to be burnt, whilst the lawyer was richly rewarded. Others say, continues Galindez, that the paper was preserved.

Castile in turbulent alternation, and the final disintegration of the realm into petty principalities appeared to be the natural and imminent outcome of the state of affairs that existed when Henry IV. breathed his last.

All Castile and Leon, with their daughter kingdoms, were looking and praying for a saviour who could bring peace and security; and at first sight it would seem as if a turbulent State that had never been ruled by a woman could hardly expect that either of the young princesses who claimed the crown could bring in its dire need the qualities desired for its salvation. Isabel's popularity, especially in Valladolid, Avila and Segovia, was great; and at the moment of the King's death her friends were the stronger and more prompt, for Villena had just died, the Beltraneja was but a child of twelve, and the Queen-mother, discredited and scorned, was lingering out her last days in a convent in Madrid.[1] The towns, for the most part, awaited events in awe, fearing to take the wrong side, and a breathless pause followed the death of the King. Isabel was at Segovia, and under her influence and that of Cabrera, the city was the first to throw off the mask and raised the pennons for Isabel and Ferdinand, to whom, in her presence, it swore allegiance and proclaimed sovereigns of Castile. Valladolid followed on the 29th December; whilst Madrid, whose fortress was in the hands of Villena's son, declared for the Beltraneja. The nobles shuffled again; moved by personal interest or rivalry, the Archbishop of Toledo, abandoning Isabel out of jealousy of Cardinal Mendoza; whilst Alburquerque, the supposed father of the Beltraneja, joined her

[1] She died in June 1475.

opponent, and civil war, aided by foreign invasion from Portugal, was organised to dispute with Isabel and her husband their right to the crown.

By rare good fortune the young couple, who were thus forced to fight for their splendid inheritance, were the greatest governing geniuses of their age. It is time to say something of their gifts and characters. They were both, at the time of their accession, twenty-three years of age, and, as we have seen, their experience of life had already been great and disillusioning. Isabel's was incomparably the higher mind of the two. The combined dignity and sweetness of her demeanour captivated all those who approached her, whilst her almost ostentatious religious humility and devotion won the powerful commendation of the churchmen who had suffered so heavily during the reign of Henry. There is no reason to doubt her sincerity or her real good intentions any more than those of her great-grandson, Philip II., a very similar, though far inferior, character. Like him, she never flinched from inflicting what we now call cruelty in the pursuance of her aims, though she had no love for cruelty for its own sake. She was determined that Spain should be united, and that rigid orthodoxy should be the cementing bond; that the sacred sovereign of Castile should be supreme over the bodies and souls of men, for her crown in her eyes was the symbol of divine selection and inspiration, and nothing done in the service of God by His vice-regent could be wrong, great as the suffering that it might entail. She was certainly what our lax generation calls a bigot; but bigotry in her time and country was a shining virtue, and is still her greatest claim to the regard of many of her country-

men. She was unmerciful in her severity in suppressing disorder and revolt; but we have seen the state at which affairs had arrived in Castile when she acceded to the crown, and it is quite evident that nothing but a rod of iron governed by a heart of ice was adequate to cope with the situation. Terrible as was Isabel's justice, it entailed in the end much less suffering than a continuance of the murderous anarchy she suppressed.[1] Her strength and activity of body matched her prodigious force of mind, and she constantly struck awe in her potential opponents by her marvellous celerity of movement over desolate tracts of country almost without roads, riding often throughout the night distances that appear at the present day to be almost incredible.

Ferdinand was as despotic and as ambitious as she, but his methods were absolutely different. He wanted the strength of Castile to push Aragonese interests in Italy and the Mediterranean; and, like Isabel, he saw that religious unity was necessary if he was to be provided with a solid national weapon for his hand. But for Isabel's exalted mystic views of religion he cared nothing. He was, indeed, severely practical in all things; never keeping an oath longer than it suited him to do so, loving the crooked way if his end could be gained by it, and he positively gloried in the tergiversation by which throughout his life he got the better of every one with whom he dealt, until death made sport of all his plans and got the better of him. His school

[1] Although she allowed a poor madman who attempted to kill Ferdinand to be torn to bits by red hot pincers, and consigned scores of thousands of poor wretches to the flames for doubting the correctness of her views on religion, she refused ever to go to a bullfight after attending one at which two men had been killed. She strongly condemned such waste of human life without good object.

of politics was purely Italian; and he cynically acted upon the knowledge, as Henry VII. of England also did, that the suppression of feudalism doomed the sovereign to impotence unless he could hoard large sums of ready money wrung from subjects. In future he saw that kings would be feared, not for the doubtful feudatories they might summon, but in proportion to the men and arms they could promptly pay for in cash; and he went one better than the two Henry Tudors in getting the treasure he saw was needed. They squeezed rills of money from religious orthodoxy, and divided their subjects for a century; he drew floods of gold by exterminating a heterodox minority, and united Spain for the ends he had in view. Ferdinand and Isabel might therefore challenge the admiration of subjects for their greatness and high aims, and command loyalty by their success as rulers; but they cannot be regarded as loveable human beings.

Between two such strong characters as these it was not to be expected that all would be harmonious at first, and the married life of Isabel began inauspiciously enough in one respect. There is no doubt that both Ferdinand and his father intended that the former should be King regnant of Castile, and not merely King consort. Ferdinand indeed, through his grandfather of the same name, was the male heir to the Castilian crowns; and as the Salic law prevailed in Aragon, they assumed that it might be enforced in Castile. This, however, was very far from Isabel's view; reinforced as she was by the decision of the Castilian churchmen and jurists, and she stood firm. For a time Ferdinand sulked and threatened to leave her to fight out her battle by herself; but better counsels prevailed, and an agreement was made by which they

were to reign jointly, but that Isabel alone should appoint all commanders, officers and administrators, in Castile, and retain control of all fiscal matters in her realms.

On the 2nd January 1475, Ferdinand joined his wife in Segovia, where a Cortes had been summoned to take the oath of allegiance to them. Through the thronged and cheering street he rode to the Alcazar; Beltran de la Cueva, Duke of Alburquerque, by his side, and nobles, bishops and burgesses, flocked to do homage to the new sovereigns. Two months later the faithful city of Valladolid greeted the royal couple with effusive joy; and a round of festivities drew the lieges and gave time for adherents to come in. Both parties were mustering forces for the great struggle; and it needed stout hearts on the part of Isabel and her husband to face the future. The Archbishop of Toledo was now on the side of the Beltraneja; and so was Madrid and some of the great nobles of Andalucia; and, worst of all, Alfonso of Portugal had been betrothed to his niece the Beltraneja; and was even now gathering his army to invade Castile and seize the crown. On the 3rd April the new sovereigns held high festival at Valladolid. Isabel, in crimson brocade and with a golden crown upon her veiled abundant russet hair, mounted a white hackney with saddle cloth, housings and mane covered with gold and silver flowers. She was followed by fourteen noble dames dressed in parti-coloured tabards, half green brocade and half claret velvet, and head dresses to imitate crowns; and, as they rode to take the place of honour in the tilt yard, men said that no woman was ever seen so beautiful and majestic as the Queen of Spain.[1] Knights and nobles flocked to the lists, and

[1] Oviedo, who knew her well, says that no other woman could compare with her in beauty.

King Ferdinand rode into the yard mounted upon his warhorse to break a lance, the acknowledged finest horseman in Spain. But as he entered the populace stared to see the strange crest he bore upon his helm, and the stranger motto emblazoned upon his shield. What could it mean? asked, not without fear, some of those who professed to be his friends. The crest took the form of a blacksmith's anvil, and the motto ran;—

Como yunque sufro y callo,
Por el tiempo en que me hallo.

I do bear, like anvil dumb,
Blows, until the time shall come.[1]

which we are told was meant as a warning to those at his side that he knew they were beguiling him with such pageantry whilst they were paltering with his enemies.

It was a gay though ominous feast; but Isabel could not afford much time for such trifling, and on the second day she mounted her palfrey and rode out to Tordesillas, forty miles away, to inspect the fortifications, and then to make an attempt to win back to her cause the Archbishop of Toledo. With prodigious activity the young Sovereigns separately travelled from fortress to fortress, animating followers, and providing for defence; and Isabel was in the imperial city of Toledo late in May 1475, when the news came to her that the King of Portugal had entered Spain with a large army, had formally married the Beltraneja at Palencia, and proclaimed himself King of Castile.[2] Without wasting a moment Isabel started on horseback for her faithful fief of Avila, ninety miles away. She was less than two days

[1] 'Cronicon de Valladolid,' Doc. Ined. 14, and also Alfonso de Palencia.

[2] As one instance of the mercenary character of the Castilian nobles of the time, I may mention that there is a bond signed by the King of Portugal in the Frias archives promising to young Villena the Mastership of Santiago in payment for his help.

on the road, and, though she had a miscarriage on the way at Cabezon she dared not tarry until safe within the walls of the city, which she entered on the 28th May.

For some months thereafter the fate of Spain hung in the balance. Ferdinand strained every nerve, but the forces against him were stronger than his, and the Archbishop of Toledo with his wealth and following had reinforced the Portuguese. The invading army lay across the Douro at Toro, a frontier fortress of Leon of fabulous strength, and Ferdinand from Valladolid attempted to push them back and was beaten. All Leon, and the plain of Castile as far as Avila, looked at the mercy of the invaders. But the Portuguese was slow of action, and at this critical juncture the splendid courage of Isabel saved the situation.[1] Summoning Cortes at her city of Medina, the centre of the cloth industry and the greatest mart for bills of exchange in Europe, she appealed to their patriotism, their loyalty, and their love. Her eloquent plea was irresistible. Money was voted without stint, merchants and bankers unlocked their coffers, churches sold their plate, and monasteries disinterred their hoards. Aragonese troops marched in, Castilian levies came to the call of their Queen, and by the end of 1475 Ferdinand was at the head of an army strong enough

[1] The King of Portugal, having heard that Castilian raiders had crossed the Portuguese frontier, is said to have proposed to Ferdinand at this juncture a compromise, by which the Beltraneja should be dropped, and Isabel recognised in return for the cession to Portugal of all Galicia and the two fortresses of Zamora and Toro which he occupied. Ferdinand was inclined to agree to this, and sent an envoy to propose it to his wife. Before the envoy had finished his first sentence Isabel stopped him indignantly, and forbade him to continue. She herself, she said, would in future direct the war, and no foot of her own realm of Castile should be surrendered. She then hurried to Medina and summoned the Cortes, as is told in the text.

to face the invaders. Isabel took her full share of the military operations. On the 8th January 1476, she rode out of Valladolid through terrible weather, in the coldest part of Spain, to join Ferdinand's half-brother, Alfonso, before Burgos. For ten days the Queen travelled through the deep snowdrifts before she reached the camp, to find that the city had already surrendered; and on the evening of her arrival, in the gathering dusk, she entered the city of the Cid, to be received by kneeling, silk-clad aldermen with heads bowed for past transgressions, to be graciously pardoned by the Queen. The pardon was hearty and prompt; for these, and such as these, Isabel meant to make her instruments for bringing Spain to heel.

In the meanwhile Ferdinand had marched to meet the invading army of 3000 horse and 10,000 foot which lay across the Douro at Toro. First he set siege to Zamora, between the invading army and its base, and the King of Portugal ineffectually attempted to blockade him. Failing in this, the invaders on the 17th February raised their camp and marched towards Toro again. They stole away silently, but Ferdinand followed them as rapidly as possible, and caught up with them twelve miles from Toro, late in the afternoon, on the banks of the Douro. The charge of the Aragonese upon the disorganised army on the march was irresistible, and a complete rout of the invaders ensued, no less than 300 of the fugitives being drowned in the river in sheer panic. King Alfonso of Portugal fled, leaving his royal standard behind him, and before nightfall all was over, and the last hope of the Beltraneja had faded for ever.

A month afterwards Zamora, the almost impreg-

nable fortress, surrendered to Ferdinand; and then the King marched to subdue other towns, whilst Isabel laid siege to Toro. The Queen scorned to avail herself of the privilege of her sex, and suffered all the hardships and dangers of a soldier's life. Early and late she was on horseback superintending the operations, and ordered and witnessed more than one unsuccessful assault upon the town. At length, after a siege of many months, Toro itself fell, the last great fortress to hold out, and Isabel rode into the starving city in triumph. Then indeed was she Queen of Castile, with none to question her right.

The waverers hastened to join the victorious side, the nobles who had helped the Beltraneja, even the Archbishop of Toledo, came penitently, one by one, to make such terms as their mistress would accord; whilst the Beltraneja herself, unmarried again by an obedient Pope, retired to a Portuguese convent, and the King of Portugal afterwards laid aside his royal crown and assumed the tonsure and coarse gown of a Franciscan friar. Never was victory more complete; and when three years later, early in 1479, the old King of Aragon, Ferdinand's father, went to his account, Isabel and Ferdinand, for ever known as 'the Catholic kings,' by grace of the Pope, reigned over Spain jointly from the Pyrenees to the Pillars of Hercules, one poor tributary Moorish realm, Granada, alone remaining to sully with infidelity the reunited domains of the Cross.

But the elements of aristocratic anarchy still existed, especially in Galicia and Andalucia, where certain noble families assumed the position of almost independent sovereigns, and at any time might again imperil the very existence of the State. With the

great ambitions of Ferdinand and the exalted fervour of Isabel to spread Christianity, it must have been clear to both sovereigns that they must make themselves absolutely supreme in their own country before they could attempt to carry out their views abroad. The realms of Aragon offered no great difficulty, since good order prevailed, although the strict parliamentary constitutions sorely limited the regal power, and gave to the estates the command of the purse. In Castile, however, the nobles, eternally at feud with each other, were quite out of hand, and Isabel's first measures were directed towards shearing them of their power for mischief. All the previous kings of her line—that of Trastamara—had been simply puppets in the hands of the nobility; she was determined, as a preliminary of greater things, to be sole mistress in her realm. Her task was a tremendous one, and needed supreme diplomacy in dividing opponents, as well as firmness in suppressing them. Isabel was a host in herself; and to her, much more than to her husband, must be given the honour of converting utter anarchy into order and security in a prodigiously short time.

The only semblance of settled life and respect for law in Castile was to be found in the walled towns. The municipal government had always been the unit of civilisation in Spain, and the nobility being untaxed, the Castilian Cortes consisted entirely of the representatives of the burgesses. With true statesmanship Isabel therefore turned to this element to reinforce the crown as against lawless nobles. The proposal to revive in a new form the old institution of the 'Sacred Brotherhood' of towns was made to her at the meeting of the Cortes at Madrigal in April 1476, and was at once accepted. A meeting of deputies was

called at Dueñas in July, and within a few months the urban alliance was complete. An armed force of 2000 horsemen and many foot-soldiers was formed and paid by an urban house tax,[1] They were more than a mere constabulary, although they ranged the country far and wide, and compelled men to keep the peace, for the organisation provided a judicial criminal system that effectually completed the task of punishment. Magistrates were appointed in every village of thirty families for summary jurisdiction, and constables of the Brotherhood were in every hamlet, whilst a supreme council composed of deputies from every province in Castile judged without appeal the causes referred to it by local magistrates. The punishments for the slightest transgression were terrible in their severity, and struck the turbulent classes with dismay. In 1480 a league of nobles and prelates met at Cabeña, under the Duke of Infantado, to protest against the Queen's new force of burgesses. In answer to their remonstrance she showed her strength by haughtily telling them to look to themselves and obey the law, and at once established the Brotherhood on a firmer footing than before, to be a veritable terror to evil-doers, gentle as well as simple.

Isabel was no mild saint, as she is so often represented. She was far too great a woman and Queen to be that; and though for the first two or three years

[1] Each group of 100 heads of families subscribed sufficient to pay, mount, arm, and maintain a horseman; and when intelligence of a crime came, every church bell in the district rang an alarm to summon the members of the constabulary to pursue the evil-doer, a special prize being given to the captor. It must be understood that the townships in Spain extend in every case over a large territory outside the walls, so that the house tax, although nominally urban because collected by the municipalities, was really collected also from rural hamlets.

of her reign diplomacy was her principal weapon, no sooner had she divided her opponents and firmly established the Holy Brotherhood, than the iron flail fell upon those who had offended. In Galicia the nobles had practically appropriated to themselves the royal revenues, and the Queen's writ had no power. That might suit weak Henry, but Isabel was made of sterner stuff than her brother had been, and in 1481 she sent two doughty officers to summon the representatives of the Galician towns to Santiago, and to demand of them money and men to bring the nobles to their senses. The burgesses despaired, and said that nothing less than an act of God would cure the many evils from which they suffered. The act of God they yearned for came, but Isabel was the instrument. Forty-seven fortresses, which were so many brigand strongholds, were levelled to the ground in the province; and some of the highest heads were struck from noble shoulders. The stake and the gibbet were kept busy, the dungeons and torture chambers full; and those of evil life in sheer terror mended their ways, or fled to places were justice was less strict.

But it is in the suppression of the anarchy at Seville that Isabel's personal action is most clearly seen. For years the city had been a prey to the sanguinary rivalry between two great families who lorded it over the greater part of Andalucia, the Guzmans and the Ponces de Leon; and at the time of Isabel's accession the feud had assumed the form of predatory civil war, from which no citizen was safe. The cities of the south were less settled in Christian organisation than those of the north, and their municipal governments not so easy to combine; and Isabel, in 1477, determined by her personal presence in Seville to

enforce the hard lessons she had taught the rest of her realms. The armed escort that accompanied her was sufficient, added to the awe already awakened by her name, to cow the turbulent spirits of Seville. Reviving the ancient practice of the Castilian kings, Isabel, alone or with her husband by her side, sat every Friday in the great hall of the Moorish Alcazar at Seville, to deal out justice without appeal to all comers. Woe betided the offender who was haled before her. The barbaric splendour, which Isabel knew how to use with effect, surrounding her, gave to this famous royal tribunal a prestige that captured the imagination of the semi-oriental population of Seville, whilst the terrible severity of its judgments and the lightning rapidity of its executions reduced the population to trembling obedience whilst Isabel stayed in the city. No less than four thousand malefactors fled—mostly across the frontier—to escape from the Queen's wrath, whilst all those who in the past had transgressed, either by plundering or maltreating others, and could be caught, were made to feel to the full what suffering was. So great was Isabel's severity that at last the Bishop of Cadiz, accompanied by the clergy and notables of Andalucia, and backed by hosts of weeping women, came and humbly prayed the Queen to have mercy in her justice. Isabel had no objection. She did not scourge and slay because she loved to do it, but to compel obedience. Once that was obtained she was content to stay her hand ; and before she left the city, a general amnesty was given for past offences except for serious crimes. But she left behind her an organised police and criminal tribunals, active and vigilant enough to trample at once upon any attempt at reviving the former state of things.

A more difficult task for Isabel was that of reforming the moral tone of her court and society at large. The Alcazar of Henry IV. had been a sink of iniquity, and the lawlessness throughout the country had made the practice of virtue almost impossible; whilst the clergy, and especially the regular ecclesiastics, were shamefully corrupt. Isabel herself was not only severely discreet in her conduct, but determined that no countenance should be given to those who were lax in any of the proprieties of life; and it was soon understood by ecclesiastics and courtiers that the only certain passport to advancement in Castile was strict decorum. It is probable that much of the sudden reform thus effected was merely hypocrisy; but it lasted long enough to become a fixed tradition, and permanently raised the standard of public and private life in Spain.

In all directions Isabel carried forward her work of reform. The great nobles found to their dismay, when the Queen was strong enough to do it, that she, fortified by the Cortes of Toledo, had cancelled all the unmerited grants so lavishly squandered by previous kings upon them. Some of those who had been most active in the late troubles, such as the Dukes of Alburquerque and Alba and the Admiral of Castile, Ferdinand's maternal uncle, were stripped almost to the skin. Isabel's revenue on her accession had only amounted to 40,000 ducats, barely sufficient for necessary sustenance; but in a very few years (1482) it had multiplied by more than twelvefold, and thirty millions of maravedis a year had been added to the royal income from resumed national grants. To all remonstrances from those who suffered, Isabel was firm and dignified, though conciliatory in manner. Her voice was sweet and her bearing womanly; she always

ascribed her measures, however oppressive they might seem, to her love for the country and her determination to make it great. Upon this ground she was unassailable; and enlisted upon her side even those who felt the pinch by appealing to their national pride.

There was no one measure that added more to Isabel's material power than her policy towards the religious orders of knighthood. These three great orders, Calatrava, Santiago, and Alcantara, had grown out of the long crusade against the Moors; devout celibate soldiers receiving in community vast grants of territory which they wrested from the infidel. By the time of Isabel they had grown to be a scandal, for the grandmasters disposed of revenues and forces as large as those of the crown, and were practically independent of it. Isabel's treatment of them was diplomatic and wise as usual. As each mastership fell vacant she granted it to her husband; and thus the three most dangerous rivals to the royal authority were made thenceforward appanages of the crown, to which the territories were afterwards appropriated.[1]

The Queen's activity and strength of body and mind

[1] The importance of obtaining control of the Orders was seen by Isabel at the very beginning of her reign. When the Master of Santiago died in 1476 the Queen was at Valladolid. Without a moment's delay she mounted her horse and rode to the town of Huete, where the Chapter to elect the new Master was to be held. She entered the Chapter and in an energetic speech urged the knights for the sake of her, their sovereign, to elect her husband their Master. The Castilian knights were angry at the idea of an Aragonese heading them, and opposed the suggestion. Isabel found a way out by pledging Ferdinand to transfer his powers as Master to a Castilian as soon as he was elected; and this he did, appointing his faithful follower Cardenas; but when the latter died Ferdinand became actual Master. Thenceforward the knighthoods (*encomiendas*) were endowed with pensions derived from rent charges on portions of the estates, the bulk of the revenue being absorbed by the King's treasury. For details of the Orders and their appropriation, see Ulick Burke's 'History of Spain' to 1515, edited by Martin Hume.

must have been marvellous. We hear of her travelling vast distances, almost incessantly in the saddle, visiting remote parts of her husband's and her own dominions for State business, to settle disputed points, to inspect fortifications, to animate ecclesiastical or municipal bodies, and to suppress threatened disorder. No difficulty seemed to dismay her, no opposition to deflect her from the exalted purpose she had in view. For it must not be supposed that this strenuous activity was sporadic and without a central object which inspired it all. In this supreme object the key to Isabel's life must be sought. Isabel's mother was mad: after the death of her husband she had sunk into the gloomy devotional lunacy which afflicted in after years so many of her descendants; and in the impressionable years of Isabel's youth, passed in the isolated castle of Arevalo, the whole atmosphere of her life had been one of mystic religious exaltation.

The Christian Spaniard of Castile had through seven centuries gradually regained for Christ his lost kingdom by a constant crusade against the infidel. The secular struggle had made him a convinced believer in his divine mission to re-establish the reign of the cross on earth. To this end saints had led him into battle in shining armour, blazing crosses in the sky had heralded victory to God's own militia, and holy relics, miraculously revealed, had served as talismans which ensured success. Mysticism and the yearning for martyrdom was in the air in Isabel's youth, and she, a saintly neurotic, who happened also to be a genius and a queen, shared to the full the Castilian national obsession. The man who fostered the growth of this feeling in the young princess at Arevalo might have been useful in spurring a sluggish

mind to devotion; but to further inflame the zeal of a girl of Isabel's innate tendency was unnecessary, and of this alone was he capable. He was a fiery, uncompromising, Dominican monk, called Tomas de Torquemada. The Dominicans, centuries before, had been entrusted by the Pope with the special duty to maintain the purity of the faith, and as its guardians, spiritual pride and arrogance had always been the characteristic of the order. Torquemada, as Isabel's confessor and spiritual tutor, had abundant opportunities of influencing her, and never ceased to keep before her the sacred duty imposed upon rulers of extirpating heresy, root and branch, at any cost. Her own brother Henry had been surrounded by the hated infidel, the enemy of Christ and Spain. Failure as a king, ruin as a man, and a miserable death, had been his portion. And so the lesson was ceaselessly dinned into Isabel's ear, that no ruler could be happy or successful who did not smite heretics, infidels and doubters, hip and thigh, for the glory of God. The Moor, she was told, still defiled in Granada the sacred soil of Spain, suffered by an unworthy Christian king to linger for the sake of the paltry tribute paid.

To establish the rule of Christ on earth, which she was taught was her sacred duty, Isabel knew that a strong weapon was needed. Only a united and centralised Spain could give her that, and Spain must be unified first of all. Her marriage with Ferdinand was a great step in advance; her suppression of the nobles and the masterships of the orders another, the submission of the country to her will and law a third, the increase of her revenues a fourth; but a greater than all was the reawakening in the breasts of all

Spaniards the mystic exaltation and spiritual pride that gave strength to their arms against the Moor in the heroic days of old. The character of the Spanish people, and the state of the public mind at the time, made it easy to stir up the religious rancour of the majority against a minority already despised and distrusted. Throughout Spain there were numerous families of the conquered race nominally Christians, but yet living apart in separate quarters, and unmixed in blood with their neighbours. They were, as a rule, industrious and well-to-do handicraftsmen and agriculturists, whose artistic traditions and skill gave them the monopoly in many profitable and thriving avocations. The Christian Spaniard had not, as a rule, developed similar qualities, and were naturally jealous of the so-called new Christians who lived with them, but were not of them.

There was, however, at first but little open enmity between these two races of Spaniards, though distrust and dislike existed. It was otherwise in the case of the Jews. They, during the centuries of Moorish rule, had grown rich and numerous, and had in subsequent periods almost monopolised banking and financial business throughout Spain, marrying in many cases into the highest Christian families. As farmers of taxes and royal treasurers they had become extremely unpopular, especially in Aragon; and although, for the most part, professed Christians, they were eyed with extreme jealousy by the people at large, and on many occasions had been the victims of attack and massacre in various places.[1] Nevertheless, so far as can be seen, the first steps towards religious persecu-

[1] As at Jaen in 1473, where the Constable of Castile was killed whilst trying to stop the massacre.

tion by Isabel and her husband do not appear to have been prompted, although they may have been strengthened, by this feeling. There had for centuries existed in Aragon and Sicily an Inquisition for the investigation of cases of heresy. It was a purely papal institution, and its operations were very mild, though extremely unpopular. In Castile, the papal Inquisition had never been favoured by rulers, who were always jealous of the interference of Rome, and at the time of Isabel's accession it had practically ceased to exist.

When the sovereigns were holding Court at Seville in 1477, a Sicilian Dominican came to beg for the confirmation of an old privilege, giving to the Order in Sicily one-third of the property of all the heretics condemned there by the Inquisition. This Ferdinand and Isabel consented to, and the Dominican, whose name was Dei Barberi, suggested to Ferdinand that as religious observance had grown so lax under the late King Henry, it might be advisable to introduce a similar tribunal into Castile. Ferdinand's ambitions were great. He wanted to win for Barcelona the mastership of the Mediterranean and the reversion of the Christian Empire of the East, and, as a preliminary, to clear Spain itself of the taint of dominant Islam at Granada. He understood that times had changed, and that the nerve of war was no longer feudal aids, but the concentration in the hands of the King of the ready money of his subjects. The people who had most of the ready money in Spain were the very people whose orthodoxy was open to attack, and he welcomed a proposal that might make him rich beyond dreams.

Isabel was not greedy for money as her husband

was: she was too much of a religious mystic for that; but to spread the kingdom of Christ on earth, to crush His enemies and raise His cross supreme in the eyes of men, seemed to promise her the only glory for which she yearned. By her side was her confessor Torquemada, the Dominican Ojeda, and the Papal Nuncio, all pressing upon her that to strike at heresy in her realms was her duty. So Isabel took the step they counselled, and begged the Pope for a bull establishing the Inquisition in Castile. The bull was granted in September 1478, but no active steps were taken for nearly two years.

In 1480, Isabel and her husband were again in Seville, and the Dominicans were ceaseless in their exhortations to them to suppress the growing scandal of obstinate Judaism. The complaints of the clergy against the Jews were such as they knew would be supported by the populace. Amongst other things, they said that the Jews bought up and ate all the meat in the market for their Sabbath, and there was none left for Christians on Sunday;[1] that they were hoarding coin to such an extent that there was a lack of currency; that they donned rich finery and ornaments only fit for their betters, and so on.[2]

The various modern apologists of Isabel have striven to minimise her share in the establishment of the dread tribunal that sprang out of these and similar complaints. There seems to me no reason for doing so: she herself probably considered it a most praiseworthy act,

[1] Galindez and Perez de Pulgar.

[2] At the Cortes of Madrigal in 1479, and in those of Toledo in 1480, Isabel and Ferdinand renewed all the old ferocious edicts against the use of silk and jewels by Jews in their garments, and ordered them strictly to confine their residence to the ghettoes, and two years later all toleration they enjoyed by papal decree was abolished.

and her only hesitation in the matter was caused by her dislike of strengthening the papal power over the church of Castile.[1] There could have been no repugnance in her mind to punishing, however severely, those whom she looked upon as God's enemies, and consequently unworthy of the privileges of humanity. Ferdinand added his persuasion to the clamours of the churchmen; and from Medina del Campo, Isabel, in September 1480, commissioned two Dominicans to act as Inquisitors, and to establish their tribunal at Seville.

The Jews of Seville took alarm at once, and large numbers of them fled from the city to the shelter of some of the neighbouring great nobles, who looked with dislike at this new development of priestly power. A decree of the sovereign's at once forbade all loyal subjects to withhold suspected heretics from their accusers, and those fugitive Jews who could escape sought the safety of Moorish Granada. In the first days of 1481, the Inquisition got to work, striking at the highest first, and before the end of the year 2000 poor wretches were burnt in Andalusia alone.[2] All Spain protested against it. Deputations from the chief towns came and demanded the abolition of a foreign tribunal over Spaniards. The Aragonese, rough and independent as usual, resorted to violence, and hunted the Inquisitors, whilst in Old Castile the tribunal could only sit, in many places, surrounded by the Queen's soldiers. But Isabel's heart was aflame with zeal, and Ferdinand, with gaping coffers, was rejoicing at the

[1] Father Florez claims for Isabel and Torquemada alone what he considers the great honour of establishing the Inquisition.

[2] In the first eight years of its existence, the Inquisition burnt in Seville alone 700 people, and sent to perpetual imprisonment in the dungeons 5000 more, confiscating all their goods.—*Bernaldez.*

showers of Jewish gold that flowed to him; and all remonstrance was in vain. The Pope himself soon took fright at the severity exercised, and threatened to withdraw the bull, but Ferdinand silenced him with a hint that he would make the Inquisition an independent tribunal altogether, as later it practically became, and thenceforward the horrible business went on unchecked until Spain was seared from end to end, and independent judgment was stifled for centuries in blood and sacrificial smoke.

The heartless bigot Torquemada, Isabel's confessor, was appointed Inquisitor-General in 1483, and he, the most insolent, because the humblest, man in Spain, became the greatest power in the land, master of Isabel's conscience and feeder of Ferdinand's purse. Isabel's Spanish biographers continue to assert that she was tireless in her endeavours to soften the rigour of her own tribunal, and to intercede for her 'dear Castilians.' There is not a scrap of real evidence known to prove that she did so, and certainly her contemporaries did not believe it.[1] Her administration, however, had already been extremely successful. Peace and order reigned, the pride of Spaniards, which she so sedulously fostered, had been worked up to a high pitch, the Queen herself was personally popular, in consequence of her dignity, her activity, and her patriotism; and the urban populations, who had so greatly aided her, and were now so powerful, dreaded to cause disturbance that might have thrown the country again into the clutches of the nobles. Terrible, therefore, as

[1] Shortly after her death, the mayor of her own city of Medina del Campo declared that the soul of Isabel had gone to hell for her cruel oppression of her subjects, and that all the people around Valladolid and Medina, where she was best known, were of the same opinion.—*Spanish State Papers*, Supplement to vols. i. and ii.

was the action of the Holy Office, acquiesced in by the Queen, there were many reasons why no combined opposition to it in Castile was offered, although for the first years of its existence it was bitterly hated.

To the Queen during these first few years of ceaseless activity, no other child had been born but the Infanta Isabel, the first fruit of her marriage in 1470. The constant long journeys on horseback, the hardships and risk entailed by her work, thus for eight years prevented the birth of a male heir. But during Isabel's stay at Seville, on the 30th June 1478, the prayed for Prince of Asturias, Juan, was born. Ferdinand was away in the north at the time, but all the pomp and splendour, which Isabel knew so well how to use, heralded the birth of the Prince. On the 15th July the Queen was sufficiently well to ride in state to the cathedral from the Moorish Alcazar where she lived, and to present her first-born son to the Church. Through the narrow, tortuous lanes of the sunny city, packed with people, Isabel rode on a bay charger ; her crimson brocade robe, all stiff with gold embroidery, trailing almost to the ground, over the petticoat covered with rich pearls. Her saddle, we are told, was of gold, and the housings black velvet, with bullion lace and fringe. Ferdinand's base brother Alfonso, and his kinswoman the Duchess of Vistahermosa, followed close behind, and the Queen's bridle was held by the Constable of Castile and Count Benavente. The merry music of fife, tabor, and clarion preceded the royal party ; and behind there came on foot the nobles and grandees, and the authorities of the city. The baby Prince was borne in the arms of his nurse, seated upon a mule draped with velvet, and embroidered with the scutcheons of Castile, Leon, and Aragon, and led

by the Admiral of Castile. At the high altar of the famous Mudejar Cathedral, Isabel solemnly devoted her child to the service of God, and then, with splendid largess to all and sundry, she returned to the palace.[1]

Isabel was unremitting always in the performance of her religious duties, and wherever she stayed, endowments for purposes of the Church commemorated her visit. Her humility and submission to priests and nuns is cited with extravagant praise by her many ecclesiastical eulogists, and they tell the story of how, when Father Talavera first succeeded Torquemada as her confessor, he bade her kneel at his feet like an ordinary penitent. When she reminded him that monarchs always sat by the side of the confessor, as she had always done before, he rebuked her by saying that his seat was the seat of God, before whom all kneeled without distinction; and the Queen thenceforward kept upon her knees before the priest, whom she honoured thenceforward for what in our days we should consider unpardonable arrogance.

There was little of repose for Isabel, even after the birth of her child. To Seville came the news a few months afterwards that the old soldier Archbishop of Toledo and the Pachecos had once more persuaded Alfonso of Portugal to strike a blow for his niece and wife the Beltraneja. Raising what troops she could, Isabel rode through Estremadura at the head of her force, determined to end for good claims that she thought had already been disposed of. Ferdinand was in Aragon, where, his father having just died, his presence could not be dispensed with; but Isabel was undismayed. In vain her councillors begged her to refrain from undertaking the campaign in person. The

[1] Florez, 'Reinas Catolicos.'

country was devastated by famine and war, they said; pestilence prevailed in the towns, and the raids of the Portuguese and rebels would expose her to great danger. 'I did not come hither,' Isabel replied, 'to shirk danger and trouble, nor do I intend to give my enemies the satisfaction, nor my subjects the chagrin, to see me do so, until we end the war we are engaged upon or make the peace we seek.'[1] Isabel, in command of the Castilians, finally crushed the Portuguese at the battle of Albuera; and then, after reducing to submission the rebel noble fortresses, she negotiated a peace with Portugal and France at Alcantara, by which both powers were compelled to recognise her as Queen of Spain. Suppressing revolt, deciding disputes, and punishing trangressions on her way, Isabel then rode to Toledo, where Ferdinand joined her, and there her third child, Joan, was born, in November 1479.

[1] Pulgar. 'Cronica de los Reyes Catolicos.'

CHAPTER II

CASTILE and Aragon, now being indissolubly united, and internal peace secured, it was time for the sovereigns to prepare for the execution of the great designs that had respectively moved them to effect what they had done. These designs were to some extent divergent from each other. Ferdinand's main object was to cripple his rival, France, in the direction of Italy, and assume for Aragon the hegemony of the Mediterranean and of the sister Peninsula, of which Sicily already belonged to him and Naples to a member of his house. Castile, on the other hand, had for centuries cultivated usually harmonious relations with France, the frontiers not being conterminous except at one point, the mouth of the Bidasoa; and the ambitions of Castile were traditionally towards the absorption of Portugal, the domination of the coast of North Africa, and the spread of the Christian power generally to the detriment of Islam, its secular enemy. Its own Moorish populations were as yet but imperfectly assimilated, and the existence of the realm of Granada in the Peninsula kept hopes alive in the breasts of the Castilian Moors. The presence of many thousands of potential enemies in the midst of Christian Spain, and the wealth and number of the Jews, who, in a struggle, would probably side with the Moors, undoubtedly influenced greatly in causing the severity of the Inquisition against them and their subsequent expulsion. The first step, therefore, to be

taken towards the objects either of Aragon and Castile, was to reduce to impotence any Moorish power in Spain itself that might cause anxiety to the Christian rulers whilst they were busy upon plans abroad, though this step was mainly important to Castile rather than to Aragon.

This was the state of affairs in the beginning of 1481. The Castilians were subdued and prepared to do the bidding of their Queen, but the Catalans and Aragonese, rough and independent, had to be conciliated before they could be depended upon to give their aid to an object apparently for the advantage of Castile. Isabel had summoned a Cortes of her realms to the imperial city of Toledo late in 1480, to take the oath of allegiance to her infant son Juan as heir to the throne: and thence, with a splendid train, she rode to visit for the first time her husband's kingdoms, to receive their homage as joint sovereign. Ferdinand met his wife at Calatayud in April 1481, and there, before the assembled Cortes of Aragon, the oath of allegiance to the sovereigns and their heir was taken. The Aragonese were rough-tongued and jealous, and even more so the Catalans, dreading the centralising policy of Isabel and their assimilation by Castile; and throughout Ferdinand's dominions Isabel was forced to hear demands and criticisms to which the more amenable Cortes of Castile had not accustomed her. It was gall and wormwood to her proud spirit that subjects should haggle with monarchs, and in Barcelona she turned to her husband, when the Cortes had refused one of his requests, and said: 'This realm is not ours, we shall have to come and conquer it.' But Ferdinand knew his subjects better than she, and gradually made them understand that in all he did he had their

interests in view. He was forced, indeed, by circumstances and his wife to allow precedence to Castilian aims, the better to compass those of Aragon.

The turbulent Valencians were being won to benevolence by the presence of their King and the smiles of his wife in the last days of 1481, when the news reached the sovereigns that the pretext they needed for their next great step had been furnished by the Moors of Granada. From the fairy palace of the Alhambra for the previous two hundred and fifty years, the Kings of Granada had ruled a territory in the South of Andalucia, running from fifteen miles north of Gibraltar along the Mediterranean coast two hundred and twenty miles to the borders of Murcia, and including the fine ports of Malaga, Velez, and Almeria. The industry of the people and the commerce of their important seaboard, facing the African land of their kinsmen, made the population prosperous and their standard of living high; but a series of petty despots, successively reaching the throne by usurpation and murder, had enabled the Kings of Castile, by fomenting the consequent discord, to reduce Granada to the position of a tributary. When Isabel succeeded, and the treaties between Castile and Granada had to be renewed in 1476, Ferdinand had demanded the prompt annual payment of the tribute in gold. Muley Abul Hassan had paid no tribute to Isabel's brother, and intended to pay none to her. 'Tell the Queen and King of Castile,' he replied, 'that steel and not gold is what we coin in Granada.' From the day they received the message Isabel and Ferdinand knew that they could not wield a solid Spain to their ends until the Cross was reared over the Mosque of Granada. When, therefore, all the rest of Spain was pacified, and

the sovereigns were at Valencia at Christmas 1481, the pretext for action came, not unwelcome, at least for Isabel. The Moors of Granada had swept down by night and captured the Christian frontier fortress of Zahara.[1] Isabel and her husband had never ceased since their accession to prepare for the inevitable war. The civil conflict they had passed through had proved the superiority for their purpose of paid troops of their own over feudal levies, and already the organisation of a national army existed. The Royal Council appointed by Isabel had brought from France, Italy, and Germany the best skilled engineers and constructors of the recently introduced iron artillery; great quantities of gunpowder had been imported from Sicily, and improved lances, swords, and crossbows had been invented and manufactured in Italy and Spain.

The troops that had been expelled from Zahara, and those that at first revenged the insult by the capture and sack of the important Moorish fortress of Alhama, between Malaga and Granada, were the vassals of the princely Andalucian nobles, the Duke of Medina Sidonia and the Marquis of Cadiz; but the sovereigns, hurrying from Valencia to the Castilian town of Medina del Campo, set about organising the coming war with national forces. The efficiency and foresight shown were extraordinary, and, up to that time, unexampled. Nothing seems to have been forgotten or left to chance; flying hospitals, field ambulances, and army chaplains, testify to Isabel's personal influence. Whatever may have been the case with Ferdinand, his wife approached the struggle as to a

[1] The Moors justified the attack by the accusation that the famous Ponce de Leon, Marquis of Cadiz, had raided and plundered the town of Mercadillo, near Ronda.

sacred crusade. Torquemada, though not yet Inquisitor General, was busy with the Holy Office, and had just been replaced as Isabel's confessor by the saintly Father Talavera, whose influence over the Queen was greater still; and whose zeal for the conquest of Granada for the cross was a consuming passion, only comparable in its strength with his proud humility.[1]

The kingdom of Granada was girt around with mountain fortresses of immense strength upon the spurs and peaks of the Sierra Nevada; and in the midst stood the lovely city, as it stands to-day, with its twin fortresses upon their sister cliffs, the Alhambra and the Albaycin, each capable of housing an army. The task of reducing the mountain realm was a great one, for the outlying fortresses had to be subdued separately before the almost impregnable capital could be attacked, whilst the long line of coast had to be watched and blockaded to prevent, if possible, succour being sent from Africa by kinsmen across the sea. In the first days of March 1482, the news of the capture of Alhama by the Andalucian nobles, and the awful slaughter of the women and children, as well as the men, who so heroically defended it, reached Isabel at Medina; and the splendid exploit and vast booty won uplifted all Castilian hearts. It is said by many historians, but is not true, that Isabel herself set out barefooted on a pilgrimage to Compostella, to thank Santiago for the victory. But though she had no time for this, she bade the Church throughout Castile sing praises for the boon vouchsafed to the Christian cause.

[1] When somewhat later the Queen urgently begged him to accept the bishopric of Salamanca, and he persistently refused, she reproached him for not obeying her once when she had obeyed him so many times. 'I will not be the bishop,' he replied, 'of any place but Granada.' He was in effect the first archbishop.

But then came tidings less bright. The Moorish King, with all his force of 80,000 men, was besieging the Marquis of Cadiz in Alhama: the water supply had been cut off, food was scarce, and the Christians surrounded. Within a week of the news Ferdinand was on the march with his army, and the Duke of Medina Sidonia, with his 40,000 armed retainers, was rapidly approaching Alhama to succour his ancient foe the Marquis of Cadiz. The slaughter of Moors in the constant unsuccessful assaults upon Alhama had been immense; the King, Muley Abul Hassan, had bitter domestic enemies, and daring not to face the approaching Christians, he raised the siege and returned to Granada. The rich booty taken in the town by the original captors aroused the cupidity of the relieving force, and dissensions between the Christians arose over the division of the spoil. Medina Sidonia and his army marched away, and again Muley Abul Hassan beleaguered Alhama, with artillery this time, and a powerful army. Once more deeds of unheard of gallantry and hardihood were done by the Moorish chivalry; but, as before, unavailingly. By the end of March Ferdinand's great host, with 40,000 beasts of burden carrying supplies and munitions, approached, and again Muley Abul Hassan retreated to his disaffected capital. It was a blow from which the Moorish power in Spain never recovered, and thenceforward Granada fought hopelessly with her back to the wall.

Into the fertile vega of Granada swept Ferdinand's host in the midsummer of 1482, carrying devastation and ruin in its van. From the heights of Granada the Moors, with impotent hate and rage, saw their blazing villages, their raided flocks and herds, their murdered

countrymen, and desolated fields ; and yet within the fair city treason and civil discord numbed all hearts, and paralysed the warrior's arms. For Muley Abul Hassan was fighting foes within his own harem more deadly than the Christians who raided beneath his walls ; and a palace revolution led by his wife and his undutiful son, Abu Abdalla (Boabdil), was already plotting his downfall. To secure his position in the vega of Granada, it was necessary for Ferdinand to capture the frowning fortress that crowned the height of Loja, and commanded the pass into Castile. It had long been a thorn in the Christian flesh, and now Ferdinand, with all the chivalry of Spain, were pledged to capture it at any cost. Though brave and cool, Ferdinand was no great tactician, and was easily outwitted by the wily Moors, who led his forces into ambush and utterly routed the Christian host. Panic and flight ensued, with the loss of baggage, standards, and arms ; and Ferdinand himself escaped only by the efforts of a small devoted band of Castilian knights. The ruin was complete, and when Ferdinand joined his heroic wife at the ancient Moorish Alcazar of Cordova, even her faith and steadfastness for a time wavered.

But not for long. Talavera, Torquemada, and Mendoza, the Cardinal of Spain, with fiery zeal for the extirpation of heresy, were at her side. Not for territory alone, but to fix God's realm on earth freely, must sacrifice be made and final victory won : and, though Ferdinand with longing eyes towards his own aims, yearned to use his arms against France for the recapture of his own provinces of Rosellon and Cerdagne, and tried to persuade his wife that though 'her war might be a holy one, his against the French

would be a just one,' Isabel had her way, and with unflinching zeal set about organising to snatch conquest from defeat.[1] Muley Abul Hassan, expelled from his city of Granada, but holding his own in Malaga and the south, had been succeeded in his capital by the weak, rebellious Boabdil. The old King and his brother, El Zagal, were still fighting doughtily, and even successfully raiding the Christian land near Gibraltar; and Boabdil, jealous of their activity, determined to sally from Granada and strike a blow for his cause, at the instigation of his masculine mother. At the head of 9000 Moors, all glittering and confident, the Prince sallied out of Granada in April 1483, and, collecting the veteran guard of Loja on the way, marched towards Cordova. The Moors were undisciplined, loaded with loot, and led by a fool, when they approached the Christian Cordovese city of Lucena, and their ostentatious march into Christian land had been heralded. Their attack upon the city was repulsed with great valour, and whilst they were meditating a renewed assault, a relieving force of Christians approached. The Moors retired, but were overtaken and utterly routed. Boabdil the King, garbed in crimson velvet mantle heavy with gold, and armed in rich damascened steel, was singled out from amongst the mob of fugitives, captured by a Castilian man-at-arms, and borne in triumph by the Christian chief, the Count of Cabra, to the strong castle of Porcuna, there to await the sovereign's decision as to his fate. Isabel and her husband were far away at the time; for, after the birth of her fourth child, Maria, in the previous summer of 1482, she and Ferdinand had travelled north to Madrid to meet the Castilian Cortes,

[1] Pulgar, 'Cronica de los Reyes Catolicos.'

and ask for supplies for carrying on the war. Thence, on a more questionable errand, they had moved further north. The little mountain realm of Navarre on the Pyrenees, a buffer state between Castile and France, belonged to the descendants of Ferdinand's father by his first wife. The desire of the Aragonese King to unite Navarre to Ferdinand's kingdoms, had removed by murder one Navarrese sovereign after another, until now, in 1482, the beautiful young half French Francis Phœbus was King. He was one more obstacle to be removed; for after him a sister would come to the throne, and she might be easily dealt with: so poison ended the budding life of Francis Phœbus — by Ferdinand's orders, it was credibly said at the time;[1] and Ferdinand and his wife hurried up to Vitoria, bent, if possible, upon adding one more crown to the brows of the Queen of Castile.[2] It was a cynically clever move of Ferdinand's, for it would bring Castile in touch with France, and thus play into the hands of the Aragonese, but the threatening attitude of Louis XI. convinced Ferdinand that he must wait for a more fitting opportunity, which he did for thirty years, when Isabel had long been dead. When the news came to Tarazona, where the Cortes of Aragon were in session, that Boabdil was captured, Ferdinand hurried south to Cordova to reap the fruits of victory, leaving Isabel in Castile.

In the great hall of the Alcazar of Cordova, Ferdinand sat in council in August 1483, surrounded by the soldiers who in his absence had overrun the vega, and two Moorish embassies claimed audience. One came from the old King, Muley Abul Hassan, in

[1] Lagréze. See also Zurita's 'Anales de Aragon.

[2] Florez, 'Reinas Catolicos.'

Malaga, begging with heavy bribes the surrender of his rebellious son Boabdil. This embassy Ferdinand refused to receive; but the other from the Queen Zoraya, Boabdil's mother, with offers of ransom, submission, and obedience, was admitted. Ferdinand was the craftiest man of his age, and saw that the imprisonment of Boabdil gave unity to the Granadan Moors, whilst his presence amongst them would again be the signal for fratricidal conflict. But the King of Aragon drove a hard bargain, as he always did, and the foolish, vain Boabdil only bought his liberty at a heavy price. He was to do homage to the Christian kings, to pay a heavy ransom and yearly tribute, and give passage to the Christian armies to conquer his father in Malaga. Boabdil meekly subscribed to any terms, and then paying homage on bended knee to his master, he wended his way to Moorish land, a mark for the scorn of all men, 'Boabdil the Little' for the rest of time.

Anarchy thenceforward reigned through the kingdom of Granada, as Ferdinand had foreseen. I shall pluck the pomegranate, seed by seed, chuckled the Christian king. And so he did; for, although a two years' truce had been settled with Boabdil, the civil war gave to the Christian borderers constant opportunities of overrunning the land, on the pretext of aiding or avenging one of the combatants and attacking the old King. Ferdinand would fain have attacked the new King of France, Charles VIII., but Isabel was firm; and though Ferdinand was thereafter obliged to stay a time in his own dominions to placate the discontented Catalans, Isabel was tireless in her insistence upon the Christian crusade that she had undertaken, though, for appearance sake, she consented to both wars being carried on at the same

time, which she knew was impracticable.[1] The spirit of the woman was indomitable. Travelling south towards the seat of war in 1484 with the new Archbishop of Toledo, Cardinal Mendoza, she herself took command of the campaign against the Moor.

It was, verily, her own war. In counsel with veteran soldiers she surprised them with her boldness and knowledge; and her harangues to the soldiery, and care for their welfare, caused her to be idolised by men who had never yet regarded a woman as being capable of such a stout heart as hers. She managed even to spur Ferdinand into leaving Aragon, and once more taking the field against the old King of Granada, and, one by one, the Moorish fortresses fell, and the Christian host encamped almost before the walls of Granada: the Queen herself, though approaching childbirth (in 1485), travelling from place to place in the conquered country, encouraging, supervising, and directing. The following year, 1486, Isabel and her husband again travelled to Cordova from Castile, and now with a greater force than ever before. For news of this saintly warrior Queen, who was fighting for the cross, had spread now through Christendom, and not Iberian knights alone, but the chivalry of France and Italy, Portugal and England, were flocking to share the glory of the struggle.

At the conquest of Loja in May 1486, Lord Rivers, Conde de Escalas, as the Spaniards called him, aided greatly with his men in capturing the place, and earned the praise of Isabel.[2] As each church was dedicated to the true worship in the conquered towns, Isabel herself contributed the sacred vessels and vestments

[1] See Perez de Pulgar, 'Reyes Catolicos.'
[2] Florez, 'Reinas Catolicos.'

necessary for Christian worship; relics of the saints, and blessed banners sent by her, went always with the Castilian hosts; and soon the spiritual pride, which had been the secret of all Spain's strength in the past, became again the overwhelming obsession, which, whilst it strengthened the arms, hardened the hearts of all those who owned the sway of Isabel.

In December 1485, Isabel's last child, Katharine, was born at Alcalá de Henares, and through most of the stirring campaigns of 1486 the Queen accompanied the army in their sieges of Moorish towns, and thence rode with her husband right across Spain to far Santiago, crushing rebellion (that of Count Lemos), holding courts of justice, punishing offences and rewarding services on the way. The next spring again saw her in the field against the important maritime city of Velez-Malaga, which was captured in April; and in the autumn the great port of Malaga fell after an heroic defence. But heroism of infidels aroused no clemency in the breast of the Christian Queen. By her husband's side, with cross borne before them, and a crowd of shaven ecclesiastics around them, they rode in triumph through the deserted city to the mosque, now purified into a Christian cathedral. Christian captives in chains were dragged from pestilent dungeons that the manacles might be struck from their palsied limbs in the victors' presence, and when the Christians had given thanks to the Lord of Hosts, the whole starving population of Malaga were assembled in the great courtyard of the fortress, and every soul was condemned to slavery for life: some to be sent to Africa in exchange for Christian captives; some to be sold to provide funds for the war, some for presents for the Pope and other



ISABEL THE CATHOLIC AT THE SURRENDER OF GRANADA.

After a Painting by Pradilla.

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potentates and great nobles, whilst all the valuables in the wealthy city were grabbed by greedy Ferdinand, by one of his usually clever and heartless devices.[1]

The want of magnanimity and common humanity to these poor people, who had only defended their homes against the invader, is usually ascribed entirely to Ferdinand; but there is nothing whatever to show that Isabel thought otherwise than he, except that she objected to a suggestion that they should all be put to the sword. She was a child of her age, an age that did not recognise the right of others than orthodox Christians to be regarded as human beings; and in Isabel all instinctive womanly feeling was dominated by her conviction of the greatness of her duty as she understood it, and the sacred mission of her sovereignty. The fall of Malaga rendered inevitable that of the city of Granada, only held, as it was, under the nominal rule of the miserable Boabdil, supported by the Christian troops under Gonzalo de Cordova. Every week his little realm grew smaller, and every hour the streets of Granada rang with Moslem curses of his name. Outside the walls rapine and war, inside treachery and murder, scourged Granada; and whilst the pomegranate was rotting to its fall, in the intervals of fresh conquests Isabel and her husband progressed through Aragon and Valencia, everywhere carrying terror to evildoers and strengthening the arm of the Inquisition. The next year, 1488, the same process was continued, and in 1489 the large cities of Baza, Almeria and Guadix were conquered from Boabdil's rebel uncle. Baza was the strongest fortress in the kingdom, and offered a resistance so obstinate that the Christians, despairing of taking it,

[1] Bernaldez, 'Reyes Catolicos,' and Bleda's 'Cronica.'

sent to Isabel at Jaen, asking her permission to raise the siege. She commanded them to redouble their efforts. Fresh men, money and munitions were sent to them. The Dukes of Alba and Najera, and the Admiral of Castile, were bidden to lead their men to aid Ferdinand before Baza. New field hospitals were supplied, and all the Mancha and Andalucia were swept for food and transport, no less than 14,000 mules, for the relief of the besiegers. Floods broke down the bridges and made the roads impassable, but still Isabel did not lose heart. A body of 6000 men were raised to repair the ways. The cost exhausted the Queen's treasury, but she laid hands on the church plate and the treasures of the convents, pledged her own crown with the Jews to overcome the obstacle, and raised a hundred million maravedis for her purpose. Her ladies followed her example and poured their gold and jewels into her coffers, and yet Baza still held out, and winter was close at hand. Ferdinand was for abandoning the siege, but the stout-hearted Queen herself set out from Jaen in November, and rode undaunted through the bitter weather, night and day, to join her troops at Baza. Her presence struck the Moors with dismay, and filled the Christian hearts with confidence, for both knew that there she would stay, at any cost, until the place surrendered, as it did, to her, on the 4th December 1489,[1] whereupon Almeria and Guadix gave up the struggle, and the

[1] The chroniclers of the siege dilate much upon the magnificent appearance of Isabel and her great train of ladies when, on the day of her arrival before Baza, she reviewed her troops in full view of the dumbfoundered Moors on the ramparts of the fortress. Her own Castilian troops, frantic with enthusiasm, no longer cried 'Long live the Queen,' but 'Long live our *King* Isabel.'—*Florez*, 'Reinas Catolicos,' and Letters of Peter Martyr, who was present.

Queen and her husband returned to winter at Seville, knowing now that Granada itself was theirs for the plucking when the season should arrive.

All through the year 1490 the preparations for the crowning feat went on throughout Castile. Patriotism, in the sense of a common pride of territory, did not exist in Spain; but already in the nine years that the Inquisition had been at work, and Isabel's fiery zeal against the Moors had continued, the spiritual arrogance, always latent, had knit orthodox Spaniards together as they had never been bound before. To the majority, the persecution of a despised and hated minority was confirmation of their own mystic selection. Isabel was the personification of the feeling, and to her, as to her people now, the oppression of the unbeliever was an act that singled her out as the chosen of God to vindicate His faith. So Torquemada and the Inquisition, with the approval of the Queen, harried the wretched Jews, who professed Christianity, more cruelly every day.[1] If a 'New Christian' broke bread with a Jew it was the former who was punished. If he dared to wear clean linen on Saturday, or used a Hebrew name, the Dominican spies, who dogged his footsteps, accused him, and the flames consumed his carcass whilst Ferdinand emptied his coffers. The revenue of the Jewish confiscations had provided much of the treasure needed for the constant war of the last eight years; but Ferdinand wanted more, and ever more, money before Granada could be made into a Christian city. Isabel would conquer Granada, and at any cost gain the undying glory of recovering for Christ the last spot in Spain held by the infidel.

[1] The professed Christian Jews were much more severely dealt with than the unbaptised.

Injustice, cruelty, robbery, and the torture of innocent people were nothing, less than nothing, to the end she aimed at; and when the flames were found all too slow for feeding Ferdinand's greed, Isabel easily consented to a blow being struck at the unbaptised Jews, in a body, whenever it was necessary to collect a specially large sum of money for *her* war.

In April 1491, the siege of the lovely city, set in its vast garden plain, was begun. The Moors inside were gallant and chivalrous, determined to sell their city dearly, however their spiritless King might deport himself; but their dashing cavalry sallies where almost futile against an army so carefully organised and disciplined as that of Isabel. The head quarters of the Christian Queen were about two leagues from Granada, and when Isabel joined her army the siege opened in grim earnest. The many contemporary chroniclers of the campaign have left us astonishing descriptions of the dazzling splendour which surrounded the Queen. She, who in the privacy of her palace was sober in her attire, and devoted to housewifely duties, could, when she thought desirable, as she did before Granada, present an appearance of sumptuous spendour almost unexampled. Her encampment, with its silken tents magnificently furnished, its floating banners and soaring crosses, were such as had never been since the time of the Crusades. On a white Arab charger, with floating mane and velvet trappings to the ground, the Queen, herself dressed in damascened armour and regal crimson, was everywhere animating, consoling, and directing. Cardinals and bishops, princes, nobles and ladies, thronged around her; and every morning as the sun tipped with gold the snow peaks of the Sierra, all in that mighty host, from the Queen down

to the poorest follower, bowed before the gorgeous altar in the midst of the camp, whilst the Cardinal of Spain (Mendoza) performed the sacred mystery of the mass.

One night in the summer (14th July) the Queen had retired to her tent and was sleeping, when, two hours after midnight, a lamp by her bedside caught the hangings, stirred by the breeze, and in a minute the great pavilion was ablaze. Isabel in her night garb had barely time to escape, and witnessed the conflagration spread from tent to tent till much of the encampment was reduced to ruin. At the cries and bugle calls of the distressed Christians, the Moors afar off on the walls beheld with joy the discomfiture of their enemies; and if another leader than Boabdil had been in command, it would have gone ill with Isabel and her men. But there was no defeat for a woman with such a spirit as hers. The suggestions that the siege should be raised until the next year, she rejected in scorn. Once again her virile spirit had its way. More money was raised, mostly squeezed out of the miserable Jews; the army was quartered in neighbouring villages, and within eighty days a city of masonry and brick replaced the canvas encampment, and here, in the city of Santa Fe,[1] Isabel solemnly swore to stay, winter and summer, until the city of Granada should surrender to her.

Granada was entirely cut off from the world. The coast towns were no longer in Moorish hands, and no

[1] Perez de Hita (Historia de los Vandos) recounts that the city of Santa Fe sprang from a marvellous edifice which four grandees caused to be constructed in a single night. It consisted of four buildings of wood covered with painted canvas to imitate stone, and surrounded by a battlemented wall of a similar construction. Roadways in the form of a cross divided the four blocks with a gate at each of the four extremities. The Moors, on seeing what they thought was a strong fortress raised so rapidly, thought that witchcraft had been at work, and were utterly cast down.

succour from Africa could come to the unhappy Boabdil. The desperate warriors of the crescent were for sallying *en masse* and dying or conquering, once for all; but Boabdil was weak and incapable; and less than a month after the completion of Isabel's new city of Santa Fe, he made secret advances to his enemy at his gates for a capitulation. The Queen entrusted the greatest of her captains, Gonzalo de Cordova, who understood Arabic, with the task of negotiation; but soon the news was whispered inside the city, and twenty thousand furious Moorish warriors rushed up the steep hill to the Alhambra, to demand a denial from the King. Seated in the glittering hall of the ambassadors, Boabdil received the spokesmen of his indignant people, and pointed out to them with the eloquence of despair the hopelessness of the situation; and the wisdom of making terms whilst they might. Stupefied and grief-stricken the populace acknowledged the truth, bitter as it was, and with bowed heads and coursing tears left the beautiful palace that was so soon to pass from them.

The negotiations were protracted, for Granada was divided and might still have held out, and the Moors begged hard for at least some vestige of independence as a State. But at last, on the 28th November 1491, the conditions were agreed to. The Granadan Moors were to enjoy full liberty for their faith, language, laws and customs; their possessions and property were to be untouched, and those who did not desire to owe allegiance to Christian sovereigns were to be aided to emigrate to Africa. The tribute to be paid was the same as that rendered to the Moorish King, and the city was to be free from other taxation for three years; whilst Boabdil was to have a tiny tributary kingdom (Purchena) of his own in the savage fastnesses of the

Alpujarra mountains, looking down upon the splendid heritage that had been his. The terms were generous to a beaten foe, and their gentleness is usually ascribed to Isabel. Since, however, they were afterwards all violated with her full consent, it matters little whether the Queen or her husband drafted them. But mild as the conditions of surrender were, many of the heart-broken Moors of the city were still for fighting to the death in defence of the land of their fathers and their faith; and Boabdil, in deadly fear for his life, begged the visitors to hasten the taking possession of the city. On the last day but one of the year 1491, the Christian men-at-arms entered the Alhambra; and on the 2nd January 1492, a splendid cavalcade went forth from the besieging city of Santa Fe to crown the work of Isabel the Catholic. Surrounded by all the nobles and chivalry of Castile and Aragon, the Queen, upon a splendid white charger, rode by her husband's side, followed by the flower of the victorious army. Upon a hill hard by the walls of the city, Isabel paused and gazed upon the towers and minarets, and upon the two fortresses that crowned the sister heights, for which her heart had yearned. This must have seemed to her the most glorious moment of her life: for the last stronghold of Islam was within her grasp; and well she must have known that, capitulations notwithstanding, but a few short years would pass before the worship of the false prophet would disappear from the land where it had prevailed so long.

At a signal the gates of the city opened, and a mournful procession came towards the royal group upon the rise. Mounted upon a black barb came Boabdil the Little, dusky of skin, with sad, weeping eyes downcast. His floating haik of snowy white half veiled a tunic of

the sacred green, covered with barbaric golden ornaments. As he approached the group upon the mound, the conquered King made as if to dismount, and kneel to kiss the feet of the Queen and her husband. But Ferdinand, with diplomatic chivalry, forbade the last humiliation, and took the massive keys of the fortress, whilst Boabdil, bending low in his saddle, kissed the sleeve of the King as he passed the keys to the Queen, who handed them to her son, and then to the Count of Tendilla, the new governor of the city. Four days later, Granada was swept and garnished, purified with holy water, ready for the entry of the Christian Sovereigns.[1] The steep, narrow lane leading to the Alhambra from the Gate of Triumph was lined by Christian troops, and only a few dark-skinned Moors scowled from dusky jalousies high in the walls, as the gallant chivalry of Castile, Leon, and Aragon, flashed and jingled after the King and Queen. As they approached the Alhambra, upon the tower of Comares there broke the banner of the Spanish Kings fluttering in the breeze, and at the same moment, upon the summit of the tower above the flag, there rose a great gilded cross, the symbol of the faith triumphant.

Then, at the gates, the heralds cried aloud, 'Granada! Granada! for the Kings Isabel and Ferdinand;' and Isabel, dismounting from her charger, as the cross above glittered in the sun, knelt upon the ground in all her splendour, and thanked her God for the victory. The choristers intoned Christian praise in the purified mosque, whilst the Moors, who hoped to live in favour of the victors, led by the renegade Muza, added the strange music of their race to the thousand instruments

[1] The title 'Catholic' was formally conferred upon them by the Pope after the taking of Granada.

and voices that acclaimed the new Queen of Granada. Amidst the rejoicing and illuminations that kept the city awake that night, Boabdil the beaten was forgotten, When he had delivered the keys of the Alhambra, he had refused to be treated by his followers any longer with royal honours, and had retired weeping to the citadel, soon to steal forth with a few followers and his masculine mother to the temporary shelter of his little principality.[1] When the sad cavalcade came to the hill called Padul, 'The last sigh of the Moor,' thenceforward tears coursed down the bronze cheeks of the King as he gazed upon the lost kingdom he was to see no more. 'Weep! weep!' cried his mother, 'weep! like a woman for the city you knew not how to defend like a man.'

Throughout Christendom rang the fame of the great Queen, whose steadfastness had won so noble a victory; and even in far-off England praise of her, and thanks to the Redeemer whose cause she had championed, were sung throughout the land. For the conquest of Granada marked an epoch, and sealed with permanence and finality the Christianisation of Europe, the struggle for which had begun eight centuries before, from the mountains of Asturias. The imagination of the world was touched by the sight of a warrior-crusading Queen, more splendid in her surroundings than any woman since Cleopatra, who yet was so modest, meek, and saintly in the relations of daily life, so exemplary a mother, so faithful a wife,[2] so wise a ruler; and the

[1] He promptly sold this to Isabel, and retired to Fez, where he was murdered. The account of the surrender is mainly taken from Perez de Hita's 'Historia de los Vandos,' 1610, and Perez de Pulgar's 'Cronica.'

[2] She is said never to have allowed Ferdinand to wear a shirt except those that she herself made for him.—*Navarro Rodrigo*, 'El Cardinal Cisneros.'

cautious, unemotional Ferdinand, whose ability as a statesman was even greater than that of his wife, was overshadowed by her radiant figure, because she fought for an exalted abstract idea, whilst his eyes were for ever turned towards the aggrandisement of himself and Aragon. She could be cruel, and deaf to pleas for mercy, because in her eyes the ends she aimed at transcended human suffering; he could be mean and false, because his soul was baser and his objects all mundane.

In the Christian camp before Granada there had wandered a man who was not a warrior, but a patient suitor, waiting upon the leisure of the Sovereigns to hear his petition. He was a man of lofty stature, with light blue eyes that gazed afar away, fair, florid face and ruddy hair, already touched with snow by forty years of toil and hardship. He had long been a standing joke with some of the shallow courtiers and churchmen that surrounded the Queen, for he was a dreamer of great dreams that few men could understand, and, worst offence of all, he was a foreigner, a Genoese some said. He had followed the Court for eight long years in pursuit of his object, the scoff of many and the friend of few; but the war, and the strenuous lives that Isabel and Ferdinand lived, had again and again caused them to postpone a final answer to the prayer of the Italian sailor, who had, to suit Spanish lips, turned his name from Cristoforo Colombo to Cristobal Colon.

At the end of 1484,[1] the man, full of his exalted

[1] The sequence of the movements of Columbus, and several facts and dates here given, vary from the current accounts. The narrative here set forth has been carefully compiled from the result of much recent Spanish research, besides the well-known texts of Navarrete and the superb anthology of contemporary information reproduced by Mr Thatcher in his exhaustive three volumes lately published. I have also depended

visions, had sailed from Lisbon, disgusted at the perfidy of the Portuguese, who had feigned to entertain his proposals only to try to cheat him of the realisation of them. His intention was first to sail to Huelva in Spain, where he had relatives, and to leave with them his child Diego, who accompanied him, whilst he himself would proceed to France, and lay his plans before the new King, Charles VIII. Instead of reaching Huelva, his pinnace was driven for some reason to anchor in the little port of Palos, on the other side of the delta, and thence the mariner and his boy wended their way to the neighbouring Franciscan Monastery of St. Maria de la Rabida, to seek shelter and food, at least for the child. Colon, as we shall call him here, was an exalted religious mystic, full of a great devotional scheme, and himself, in after years, wore a habit of St. Francis. It was natural, therefore, that he should be well received by the brothers in that lonely retreat overlooking the delta of the Rio Tinto; for he was, in addition to his devotion, a man of wide knowledge of the world as well as of science and books, and in the monastery there was an enlightened ecclesiastic who had known courts and cities, one Friar Juan Perez, who had once been a confessor of Queen Isabel. With him and the physician of the monastery, Garcia Hernandez, Colon discussed cosmogony, and interested them in his theories, and the aims that led him on his voyage. The mariner needed but little material aid, two or three small ships, which could easily have been provided for him by private enterprise. But his plans were far reaching, and well he knew that to be

much upon Rodriguez Pinilla's 'Colon en España,' Cappa's 'Colon y los Españoles,' and Ibarra y Rodriguez's 'Fernando el Catolico y el Descubrimiento de America,' etc. etc.

able to carry them out, the lands he dreamed of discovering could only produce for him the means to attain the result he hungered for, if a powerful sovereign would hold and use them when he had found them.[1]

There was a great magnate within a few days' journey of the monastery, who himself was almost a sovereign, and not only had ships in plenty of his own, but could, if he pleased, obtain for any plan he accepted the patronage of powerful sovereigns. This was the head of the Guzmans, the Duke of Medina Sidonia, the Andalucian noble who controlled the port of Seville and the coasts of the south. It must have seemed worth while to Colon to address himself to this neighbouring noble before setting out on his long voyage to France; for he journeyed from La Rabida towards Seville, leaving his child, Diego, to be educated and cared for by the friars of the monastery. He found the Duke of Medina Sidonia irresponsive to his approaches, and was again thinking of taking ship to France, when he was brought into contact, by what means is not known, with another great noble almost as powerful as the head of the Guzmans, the Duke of Medina Celi, who, from his palaces at Rota and Puerto de Santa Maria, on the Bay of Cadiz, disposed of nearly as many sail as Medina Sidonia.

The magnate listened, often and attentively, to the eloquent talk of the sailor seer whom he lodged in his house: how, far away across the western ocean, beyond the islands that the Portuguese had found, lay Asia, the home of gems and spices rare, now only reached painfully across the forbidden lands of the infidel and by the Levant Sea, or perchance, though that was not

[1] See Columbus's own letter to the nurse of Prince Juan, reproduced by Mr Thatcher.

sure, around the mighty African continent; that wealth untold lay there in pagan hands, awaiting those who, with cross and sword, should capture it, and win immortal souls for Christ, and so eternal glory. He, Colon, was the man destined by God to open up the new world foretold to Saint John in the tremendous dream of the Apocalypse, for some vast object of which he yet refrained to speak. Books, Seneca, Ptolemy, and the Arab geographers, the Fathers of the Church, legends half forgotten, the conclusions of science, the course of the stars, and the concentrated experience of generations of sailor men, were all used by the Genoese to convince the Duke. The prospect was an attractive one, and Medina Celi promised to fit out the expedition.

In the building yards of Port Santa Maria the keels of three caravels were laid down to be built under Colon's superintendence. They were to cost three or four thousand ducats, and be fitted, provisioned and manned, for a year at the Duke's expense; and Colon must have thought that now his dream was soon to come true, and that his doubt and toil would end. But for the inner purpose he had in view beyond the discovery of the easy way to Asia, he needed a patron even more powerful than Medina Celi; and it may have been the discoverer who took means to let the Queen of Castile know the preparations that were being made, or, as Medina Celi himself wrote afterwards, the information may have been sent to Court by the Duke, fearing to undertake so great an expedition without his sovereign's licence.[1] In either case,

[1] As Medina Celi was with Ferdinand during all the campaign of 1485, it is possible that he may have mentioned it to the King then, and have been told that when there was time the sovereigns themselves would examine into the matter.

when Isabel was informed of it in the winter of 1485, she and her husband were in the north of Spain, and instructed the Duke to send Colon to court, that they might hear from his own mouth what his plans were.

The mariner arrived at Cordova on the 20th January 1486, with letters of introduction from the Duke to the Queen and his friends at court. The sovereigns were detained by business in Madrid and Toledo for three months after Colon came to Cordova; but his letters procured for him some friends amongst the courtiers there, with whom he discussed the theories he had formed, especially with the Aragonese Secretary of Supplies, the Jewish Luis de Sant'angel, who, throughout, was his enlightened and helpful friend. Most of the idle hangers-on of the court at Cordova, clerical and lay, made merry sport of the rapt dreamer who lingered in their midst awaiting the coming of the sovereigns. His foreign garb and accent, his strange predictions, absurd on the face of them—for how could one arrive at a given place by sailing directly away from it?—all convinced the shallow pates that this carder of wool turned sailor was mad.

When Isabel and Ferdinand at last arrived at Cordova, on the 28th April 1486, the season was already further advanced than usual to make preparations for the summer campaign: and there was little leisure for the sovereigns to listen to the vague theories of the sailor. But early in May Colon was received kindly by Isabel and her husband, and told his tale. Their minds were full of the approaching campaign, and of the trouble between Aragon and the new King of France about the two counties on the frontier unjustly withheld from Ferdinand; and after seeing Colon for the first time Isabel instructed the secretary, Alfonso

de Quintanilla to write to the Duke of Medina Celi that she did not consider the business very sure; but that if anything came of it the Duke should have a share of the profits.

In the meanwhile Ferdinand and his wife were too busy to examine closely themselves into the pros and cons of Colon's scheme, and followed the traditional course in such circumstances, that of referring the matter to a commission of experts and learned men to sift and report. The president of the commission was that mild-mannered but arrogant-minded confessor of the Queen, Father Talavera; the man of one idea whom the conquest of Granada for the cross blinded to all other objects in life. With him for the most part were men like himself, saturated with the tradition of the church, that looked upon all innovation as impiety, and all they did not understand as an invention of the evil one. So, when Colon sat with them and expounded his theories to what he knew were unsympathetic ears, he kept back his most convincing proofs and arguments; for his treatment in Portugal had taught him caution.[1] There were two, at least, of the members of the commission who fought hard for Colon's view, Dr. Maldonado and the young friar Antonio de Marchena, but they were outvoted; and when the report was presented it said that Colon's project was impossible, and that after so many thousands of years he could not discover unknown lands, and so surpass an almost infinite number of clever men who were experienced in navigation.[2]

Hardly had Talavera and his colleagues assured the sovereigns that the whole plan was impossible and

[1] Las Casas and F. Colon.
[2] Fernando Colon.

vain, unfit for royal personages to patronise,[1] than Ferdinand again took the field (20th May), and once more Cristobal Colon was faced by failure. But he was a man not easily beaten. During his stay at Cordova he had made many friends, and gained many protectors at Court. First was his close acquaintance, Luis de Sant'angel, by whose intervention he was so promptly received by the sovereigns after their arrival at Cordova; but others there were of much higher rank: the great Cardinal Archbishop of Toledo, Mendoza, the tutor of the Prince Don Juan, Friar Diego Deza, Friar Juan Perez, who had first received Colon at La Rabida, and was now at court, Alonso de Quintanilla, the Queen's secretary, Juan Cabero, the intimate Aragonese friend and chamberlain of the King; and one who probably did more in his favour quietly than any one else, that inseparable companion of Isabel, Beatriz de Bobadilla, now Marchioness of Moya.

But it was weary waiting. As we have seen, the energies of the sovereigns were absorbed in the war. Ferdinand, moreover, was desperately anxious to finish it successfully, and get to Aragonese problems that interested him more directly; the intended war with France and that world-wide combination he was already planning, by which not the strength of Spain alone but that of all Christendom should be at his bidding, to humble his rival and exalt Aragon in Italy, the Mediterranean and the East. It was too much to expect that Ferdinand would welcome very warmly any project for frittering away in another direction the strength of the nation he was hungering to use for his own ends. Isabel, on the other hand, would naturally be inclined to listen more sympathetically to such a

[1] Las Casas.

project as that of Colon. Here was half a world to be won to Christianity under her flag, here was wealth illimitable to coerce the other half, and, above all, here was the fair-faced mystic with his lymphatic blue eyes, like her own, showing her how the riches that would fall to his share were all destined for a crusade even greater than that of Granada, the winning of the Holy Sepulchre from the infidel, and the fixing for ever of the sovereign banner of Castile upon the country hallowed by the footsteps of our Lord. To Isabel, therefore, more than to Ferdinand, must it be attributed, that when the campaign of 1486 was ended the Italian mariner was not dismissed, notwithstanding the unfavourable report of Talavera's commission.

The sovereigns were obliged to start out to far Galicia, as has been related on page 64 ; but before they went they replied to Colon that, 'though they were prevented at present from entering into new enterprises, owing to their being engaged in so many wars and conquests, especially that of Granada, they hoped in time that a better opportunity would occur to examine his proposals and discuss his offers.'[1] This answer, at all events, prevented Colon's supporters in Spain from despairing ; and whilst the monarchs were in Galicia in the winter of 1486, the Dominican Deza, the Prince's tutor, who was also a professor at Salamanca, conceived the idea that an independent inquiry by the pundits of the university might arrive at a different conclusion from that of Talavera's commission, and undo the harm the latter had effected. Though there is no evidence of the fact, it is certain that Deza, who was a Castilian and a member of the Queen's household, would not have taken such a step as he did

[1] Fernando Colon.

without Isabel's consent. In any case, Colon travelled to Salamanca; and there, as the guest of Deza in the Dominican monastery of Saint Stephen, he held constant conference with the learned men for whom the famous University was a centre.

Isabel and her husband themselves arrived at Salamanca in the last days of the year 1486, and heard from Deza and other friends that, in the opinion of most of them, the plans of Colon were perfectly sound. The effect was seen at once: the mariner accompanied the Court to Cordova in high hopes, no longer an unattached projector of doubtful schemes, but a member of the royal household. Before once more taking the field in the spring of 1487, the Queen officially informed Colon that 'when circumstances permitted she and the King would carefully consider his proposal'; and in the meantime a sum of 3000 maravedis was given to him for his sustenance, a grant that was repeated, and sometimes exceeded, every few months afterwards. In August 1487, Colon was summoned by the sovereigns to the siege of Malaga, probably to give advice as to some maritime operations; but thenceforward he usually resided in Cordova, awaiting with impatience the convenience of the Queen and King.

During the heartbreaking delay he entered again into negotiation with the Kings of Portugal, France, and England, but without result; and it was only when the city of Granada was near its fall, and the end of the long war in sight, that Colon, following the sovereigns in Santa Fe, saw his hopes revive. Now, for the first time, he was invited to lay before them the terms he asked for if success crowned his project. Isabel had been already gained to Colon's view by the transparent conviction of the man and his saintly zeal.

His friends at Court were now many and powerful, and Ferdinand himself had not failed to see that the promised accession of wealth to be derived from the discovery would strengthen his hands. Perhaps he, like Isabel, had been dazzled with Colon's life-dream of the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre; for that would, if it were effected, tend to realise the highest ambitions of Aragon. But Ferdinand, as a prudent man of business, never allowed sentiment, however exalted, to override practical considerations. When, therefore, the terms demanded by Colon were at length submitted to him and the Queen, he unhesitatingly rejected them as absolutely out of the question. Much obloquy has been heaped upon Ferdinand for his lack of generosity in doing so; but a perusal of the conditions, with a consideration of the circumstances and ideas of the times, will convince any impartial person that Ferdinand's first rejection of them was more to his credit than his subsequent acceptance with the obvious intention of violating them.

They were, indeed, extravagant and impracticable to the last degree. The title of Admiral had only been given in Spain to nobles of the highest rank and greatest possessions. The office, usually hereditary, carried with it seignorial rights over the coasts and ports that were practically sovereign, as in the case of the Enriquezs in Castile and of Medina Sidonia in Andalucia. And yet Colon, a plebeian Italian sailor, dropped as if from the clouds, made as his first demand, that he should be recognised as 'Admiral of all the islands and continents that may be discovered or gained by his means, for himself during his life, and for his heirs and successors for ever, with all the prerogatives and pre-eminences appertaining to such

office, as they are enjoyed by Don Alonso Enriquez, your Admiral of Castile.' The Admiral of Castile was Ferdinand's uncle, and the second person in realm after the blood royal; and, although the office was hereditary in his house, the sovereigns of Castile had never surrendered the power of withdrawing the title if they pleased, whereas the Italian mariner demanded that for ever he and his should be practically independent of the sovereigns. The second condition was, that Colon was to be Governor and Viceroy of all islands and continents discovered, with the right of nominating three persons for each sub-governorship or office from which the sovereigns were bound to choose one. This latter condition was also an infraction of the right of the kings to choose their own officers freely. The discoverer claimed for himself and his heirs for ever one clear tenth of all merchandise, gold, gems, pearls, and commodities of every sort, bought, bartered, found, gained, or possessed, in the territories discovered. It was just, of course, that Colon should be splendidly rewarded if success crowned his efforts, but the imagination reels at the idea of the stupendous wealth that would have been his by virtue of such a claim as this. But this was not all. Colon claimed the right, if he pleased, of taking one-eighth share in every expedition and trading venture leaving Spain for the Indies, and, to crown all, if any dispute arose with regard to the discoverer's rights and profits, under the capitulation, he and his nominees were to be the sole judges of the case.

Most of these demands could not be legally granted under the laws of Castile, and it is no wonder that when Colon refused to modify them, he was curtly dismissed by Ferdinand, and told to go about his

business and propose his plans elsewhere. There is no reason to doubt, in spite of romantic legends unsupported by evidence, that Isabel acquiesced in this action of her husband. She was, it is true, strongly in favour of the proposed undertaking; but she was a greater stickler than Ferdinand for her regal prerogatives, and it is unlikely that she would have lightly surrendered them thus any more than he. In any case, Colon, in high dudgeon, left Santa Fe with the intention of offering his plans to France. First visiting in Cordova the lady with whom he had lived, he proceeded on his way to La Rabida, where his son Diego was still living, thence to embark for France. In the monastery there he again met the guardian, Fray Juan Perez, the Queen's confessor, to whom he told his tale of disappointment; and the physician, Hernandez, was summoned to the conference.

Colon, with his earnestness and eloquence, impressed them more than ever with the glowing prospects of wealth unlimited for Spain, and glory undying for the Christian Queen, who should bring pagan Asia into the fold of the Church; and, unknown to the explorer, Juan Perez sent post haste by a trusty messenger a letter to the Queen urging her not to let Colon go elsewhere with his plans. It is well-nigh two hundred miles, and a bad road, from Palos to Granada, and Isabel was in the midst of taking possession of the conquered city; but yet she found time to send back an answer within a fortnight to Perez, who, by one pretext or another, had detained Colon in the monastery, bidding her late confessor himself to come and see her without delay, that she might discuss with him the subject of his solicitude. Perez lost no time; for at midnight the same day, without

a word to Colon, he rode out of La Rabida towards Granada.

What arguments he used to Isabel we do not know, probably he told her that Colon was inclined now to modify his pretensions. In any case, the good friar hurried back to the monastery with the cheering news that the Queen had promised to provide three caravels for the expedition, and summoned Colon to court again, sending him, in a day or two, two thousand maravedis to buy himself some new clothes, and make him fit to appear before her. It is extremely unlikely —indeed impossible—that Isabel should have taken this step without Ferdinand's consent. She was the stronger vessel, and may have won him over to her way of thinking, aided probably by the representations of Juan Perez, that Colon's terms would be modified.

The explorer arrived at Granada shortly after the triumphal entry of the conquerors, and saw Isabel (and presumably her husband) on several occasions at their quarters at Sante Fe. To Ferdinand's annoyance he found that Colon still insisted upon the same impracticable conditions as before. Talavera, the new Archbishop of Granada, full of zeal for the Christianisation of his new diocese, frowned at all suggestions that might divert attention to another direction; and finally, the King and Queen decided to dismiss Colon for good as impossible to deal with. Rather than bate a jot of his vast claims, for, as he solemnly asserted afterwards, he needed not the wealth for himself, but to restore the Holy Land to Christendom, he wended his way heartbroken towards his home at Cordova; his red hair now blanched entire to snow. The glory for Spain of discovering a new world for civilisation was trembling in the balance. The great dreamer,

hopeless, had turned his back upon the court after seven years of fruitless waiting, and Ferdinand, this time, had no intention of recalling him.

Then the keen business prescience of the Jew Secretary of Supplies, Luis de Sant'angel, pained that such bright hopes should be carried to other lands, took what, for a man of his modest rank, was a very bold step. He was a countryman of Ferdinand, and in his confidence, but it was to Isabel he went, and with many expressions of humility and apology for his daring,[1] urged her not to miss such a chance as that offered by the Genoese. Sant'angel appears to have been under the impression that the main reason for Colon's dismissal was the difficulty of the Castilian treasury providing the money he asked for, as he offered to lend the million maravedis necessary. It is quite likely, indeed, that he did not know the details of the explorer's demands as to reward. Isabel appears to have thanked Sant'angel for his offer and opinion, with which she said she agreed; but asked him to defer the matter until she was more at leisure.

This was something gained; but the principal difficulty was to persuade Ferdinand. Another Aragonese it was who undertook it; that inseparable companion of the King, the Chamberlain, Juan Cabero. What arguments he employed we know not, but he was as astute as Ferdinand himself, and probably we shall not be far from the truth when we presume that he and his master agreed that, since the Queen was so bent upon the affair, it would be folly to haggle further over terms, which, after all, if they were found inconvenient, could be repudiated by the sovereigns, and it

[1] The speech, which is probably apocryphal, is given at length by Las Casas.

is probable that Isabel may have been influenced by the same view. So, a few hours only after Colon had shaken the dust of Santa Fe from his feet, a swift horseman overtook him at the bridge of Los Pinos, and brought him back to court.

Again he stood firm in his immoderate pretensions, and the chaffering with him was resumed, for it must have been evident to Ferdinand that the terms could never be fulfilled. It must not be forgotten that Colon had come with a mere theory. The plan was not to discover a new continent: there was no idea then of a vast virgin America, but only of a shorter way to Japan and the realms of the great Khan. Such a project, great as the profit that might result, would naturally loom less in the sight of contemporary Spaniards than the Christianisation of Granada, and it is unjust to blame Ferdinand for holding out against terms which were even a derogation of his own and his wife's sovereignty. Isabel, far more idealist than her husband, was ready to accede to Colon's demands, and her advocacy carried the day. Possibly, to judge from what followed, even she assented, with the mental reservation that she, as sovereign, could, if she pleased, cancel the concessions she granted to Colon if she found them oppressive.

The terms demanded, however, were not the only difficulty in the way. There was the question of ready money; and the war had exhausted the treasury. It is an ungracious thing to demolish a pretty traditional story, but that of Isabel's jewels, sacrificed to pay for Colon's first voyage, will not bear scrutiny.[1]

[1] The legend of Queen Isabel and her jewels has been now completely disproved by my friend, Don Cesareo Fernandez Duro, in his article 'Las Joyas de la Reina Isabel' in the 'Revista Contemporanea,' vol. xxxviii.

As a matter of fact, her jewels were already pawned for the costs of the war, and although Las Casas, Bernaldez, and Colon's son Fernando, say that the Queen offered to Sant'angel to pawn her jewellery for the purpose, and it is probable enough that in the heat of her enthusiasm she may have made such a suggestion figuratively, it is now quite certain that the money for the expedition was advanced by Luis de Sant'angel, although not as was, and is, usually supposed, from his own resources, but from money secretly given to him for the purpose from the Aragonese treasury, of which he was a high officer.[1]

The agreement with Colon was signed finally in Santa Fe on the 17th April 1492, and at the end of the month the great dreamer departed, this time with a light heart and rising hopes, to Palos and La Rabida to fit out his caravels, and sail on the 3rd August 1492 for his fateful voyage. With him went Isabel's prayers and hopes; and during his tiresome and obstructed preparations at Palos, she aided him to the utmost by grants and precepts,[2] as well as by appointing his legitimate son, Diego, page to her heir, Prince Juan, in order that the lad might

[1] Professor Ibarra y Rodriguez's interesting study 'Fernando el Catolico y el Descubrimiento' (Madrid, 1892) makes this matter clear for the first time. The treasury of Castile was empty, but Ferdinand had plenty of money in Aragon. He was careful, however, not to allow the Castilians to know this, or they would have clamoured for some of it for their war against Granada, whilst he was hoarding it for his war against France. He therefore went through the comedy of causing Sant'angel to lend the million maravedis, apparently out of his own pocket, but the money was secretly advanced for the purpose to Sant'angel from the King's Aragonese treasury, to which it was subsequently repaid through Sant'angel.

[2] Some of these took the form of generosity at other people's expense. The town of Palos was ordered, as punishment for some offence, to provide two caravels and stores.

have a safe home during his father's absence. Although Isabel's action in the discovery may be less heroic and independent of her husband, than her enthusiastic biographers are fond of representing, it is certain that but for her Ferdinand would not have patronised the expedition. Looking at the whole circumstances, and his character, it is difficult to blame him, except at last for agreeing to terms that he knew were impossible of fulfilment, and which he probably never meant to fulfil. But Isabel's idealism in this case was wiser than Ferdinand's practical prudence, so far as the immediate result was concerned, and to Isabel the Catholic must be given the glory of having aided Columbus, rather than to her husband, who was persuaded against his will.

Granada was conquered for Isabel, and it was now Ferdinand's turn to have his way. For years Aragonese interests had had to wait, though, as Ferdinand well knew, the unifying process, which he needed for his ends, was being perfected the while. Under the stern rule of Torquemada the Inquisition had struck its tentacles into the nation's heart, and, crazy with the pride of superiority over infidels, the orthodox Spaniard was rapidly developing the confidence in his divine selection to scourge the enemies of God, which made the nation temporarily great. Isabel was the inspiring soul of this feeling. A foreigner, visiting her court soon after Granada fell, wrote, as most contemporaries did of her, in enthusiastic praise of what we should now consider cruel bigotry. 'Nothing is spoken of here,' he says, 'but making war on the enemies of the faith, and sweeping away all obstructions to the Holy Catholic Church. Not with worldly, but with heavenly aim, is all they undertake, and all they do

seems inspired direct from heaven, as these sovereigns most surely are.'[1]

This eulogium refers to the plan then under discussion for ridding Isabel's realms of the taint of Judaism. We are told that to the Queen's initiative this terrible and disastrous measure was due. 'The Jews were so powerful in the management of the royal revenues that they formed almost another royal caste. This gave great scandal to the Catholic Queen, and the decree was signed that all those who would not in three months embrace the faith, were to leave her kingdoms of Castile and Leon.'[2] Ferdinand was quite willing, in this case, to give the saintly Queen and her clergy a free hand, because, to carry out his world-wide combination to humble France, he would need money—very much money—and the wholesale confiscation of Jewish property that accompanied the edict of expulsion was his only ready way of getting it. On the 30th March 1492, less than three weeks before the signature of the agreement with Colon, the dread edict against the Jews went forth. Religious rancour had been inflamed to fever heat against these people, who were amongst the most enlightened and useful citizens of the State, and whose services to science, when the rest of Europe was sunk in darkness, make civilisation eternally their debtor. They were said to carry on in secret foul rites of human sacrifice, to defile the Christianity that most of them professed, and Isabel's zeal, prompted by the churchmen, was already climbing to the point afterwards reached by her great-grandson, Philip II., when

[1] Quoted by Florez. 'Reinas Catolicos.'

[2] *Ibid.* Both Luis de Sant'angel, who served as accountant general, and Gabriel Sanchez, the Aragonese treasurer, were of Jewish descent.

he swore that, come what might, he would never be a king of heretic subjects.

By the 30th July 1492 not a professed Jew was to be left alive in Isabel's dominions. With cruel irony, in which Ferdinand's cynical greed is evident, the banished people were permitted to sell their property, yet forbidden to carry the money abroad with them. At least a quarter of a million of Spaniards of all ranks and ages, men, women, and children, ill or well, were driven forth, stripped of everything, to seek shelter in foreign lands. The decree was carried out with relentless ferocity, and the poor wretches, straggling through Spain to some place of safety, were an easy prey to plunder and maltreat. It was a saturnalia of robbery. The shipmasters extorted almost the last ducat to carry the fugitives to Africa or elsewhere, and then, in numberless cases, cast their passengers overboard as soon as they were at sea. It was said that, in order to conceal their wealth, the Jews swallowed their precious gems, and hundreds were ripped up on the chance of discovering their riches. There was no attempt or pretence of mercy. The banishment was intended, not alone to remove Judaism as a creed from Spain—that might have been done without the horrible cruelty that ensued—but as a doom of death for all professing Jews; for Torquemada had, five years before, obtained a Bull from the Pope condemning to major excommunication the authorities of all Christian lands who failed to arrest and send back every fugitive Jew from Spain.[1]

[1] From Ulick Burke's 'History of Spain.' Edited by Martin Hume. Only five years after the expulsion from Spain, as many of the Spanish Jews had fled to Portugal, Isabel, through her daughter, who had married the King of Portugal, coerced the latter to expel all Jews from his country.

Isabel appears to have had no misgiving. Her spiritual guides, to whom she was so humble, praised her to the skies for her saintly zeal: her subjects, inflated with religious arrogance, joined the chorus raised by servile scribes and chroniclers, that the discovery of the new lands by Colon was heaven's reward to Isabel for ejecting the Hebrew spawn from her sacred realm; and if her woman's heart felt a pang at the suffering and misery she decreed, it was promptly assuaged by the assurance of the austere churchmen, who ruled the conscience of the Queen.

Leaving Talavera as archbishop, and Count de Tendilla as governor of conquered Granada, Isabel and her husband, with their children and a splendid court, travelled in the early summer of 1492 to their other dominions where their presence was needed. Ferdinand, indeed, was yearning to get back to his own people, who were growing restive at his long absence, and for the coming war with France, it was necessary for him to win the love of his Catalan subjects, who, at first, still remembering his murdered half-brother, the Prince of Viana, had borne him little affection. He had treated them, however, with great diplomacy, respecting their sturdy independence, and had asked little from them, and by this time, in the autumn of 1492, when he and Isabel, with their promising son, Juan, by their side, rode from Aragon through the city of Barcelona to the palace of the Bishop of Urgel, where they were to live, the Catalans were wild with enthusiasm for the sovereigns with whose names all Christendom was ringing.

Ferdinand nearly fell a victim to the attack of a lunatic assassin in December, as he was leaving his hall of justice at Barcelona, and during his imminent danger

Isabel's affection and care for him gained for her also the love of the jealous Catalans.[1] Throughout the winter in Barcelona Ferdinand was busy weaving his web of intrigue around France and Europe, to which reference will presently be made, and in March 1493 there came flying to the court the tremendous news that Colon had run into the Tagus for shelter after discovering the lands for which he had gone in search. No particulars of the voyage were given; but not many days passed before Luis de Sant'angel, the Aragonese Treasurer Gabriel Sanchez, and the monarchs themselves, received by the hands of a messenger sent by the explorer from Palos, letters giving full details of the voyage.[2] No doubt as to the importance of the discovery was any longer entertained, and when the Admiral of the Indies himself entered Barcelona in the middle of April, after a triumphal progress across Spain, honours almost royal were paid to him. He was received at the city gates by the nobles of the court and city, and led through the crowded streets to the palace to confront the sovereigns, at whose feet he was, though he and they knew it not, laying a new world. With him he brought mild bronze-skinned natives decked with barbaric gold ornaments, birds of rare plumage, and many strange beasts; gold in dust and nuggets had he also, to show that the land he had found was worth the claiming.

Ferdinand and Isabel, with their son, received him in

[1] It is said that Ferdinand tried to save the life of his assailant, who had been condemned to the most cruel and awful tortures as a punishment. The Catalans, furious at being baulked of their vengeance, appealed to Isabel, who decided that the sentence should be carried out, but that the victim should be secretly suffocated first.

[2] The Luis de Sant'angel and the Sanchez letter have been published several times, but the letter to the Sovereigns has been lost, but for some passages quoted by Las Casas.

state in the great hall of the bishop's palace; and, rising as he approached them, bade him to be seated, an unprecedented honour, due to the fact that they recognised his high rank as Admiral of the Indies. With fervid eloquence he told his tale. How rich and beautiful was the land he had found; how mild and submissive the new subjects of the Queen, and how ready to receive the faith of their mistress. Isabel was deeply moved at the recital, and when the Admiral ceased speaking the whole assembly knelt and gave thanks to God for so signal a favour to the crown of Castile. Thenceforward during his stay in Barcelona, Colon was treated like a prince; and when he left in May to prepare his second expedition to the new found land, he took with him powers almost sovereign to turn to account and bring to Christianity the new vassals of Queen Isabel.

It is time to say something of Isabel's family and her domestic life. As we have seen, she had been during the nineteen years since her accession constantly absorbed in state and warlike affairs; and the effects of her efforts to reform her country had already been prodigious, but her public duties did not blind her to the interests of her own household and kindred; and no personage of her time did more to bring the newborn culture into her home than she. She had given birth during the strenuous years we have reviewed to five children. Isabel, born in October 1470; John, the only son, in 1478; Joan in 1479, Maria in 1482, and Katharine at the end of 1485: and these young princesses and prince had enjoyed the constant supervision of their mother. Her own education had been narrow under her Dominican tutors, and that of Ferdinand was notoriously defective. But Isabel was determined that her children should not suffer in a similar

respect, and the most learned tutors that Italy and Spain could provide were enlisted to teach, not the royal children alone, but the coming generation of nobles, their companions, the wider culture of the classics and the world that churchmen had so much neglected. And not book learning alone was instilled into these young people by the Queen. She made her younger ladies join her in the work of the needle and the distaff, and set the fashion for great dames to devote their leisure, as she did, to the embroidering of gorgeous altar cloths and church vestments, whilst the noble youths, no longer allowed, as their ancestors had been, to become politically dangerous, were encouraged to make themselves accomplished in the arts of disciplined warfare and literary culture.

Isabel, like all her descendants upon the throne, set a high standard of regal dignity, and in all her public appearances assumed a demeanour of impassive serenity and gorgeousness which became traditional at a later period; but she could be playful and jocose in her family circle, as her nicknames for her children prove. Her eldest girl, Isabel, who married the King of Portugal, bore a great resemblance to the Portuguese mother of Isabel herself, and the latter always called her child 'mother,' whilst her son Juan to her was always the 'angel,' from his beautiful fair face. She could joke, too, on occasion, though the specimens of her wit cited by Father Florez are a little outspoken for the present day; and her contemporary chroniclers tell many instances of her keen caustic wit. Her tireless and often indiscreet zeal for the spread of the faith has been mentioned several times in these pages; but submissive as she was to the clergy, she was keenly alive even to their defects, and

the laxity of the regular orders, which had grown to be a scandal, was reformed by her with ruthless severity. Her principal instrument, perhaps the initiator, of this work was the most remarkable ecclesiastical statesman of his time, and one of the greatest Spaniards who ever lived, Alfonso Jimenez de Cisneros.

A humble Franciscan friar of over fifty, living as an anchorite in a grot belonging to the monastery of Castañar, near Toledo, after a laborious life as a secular priest and vicar general of a diocese, would seem the last man in the world to become the arbiter of a nation's destinies; and yet this was the strange fate of Jimenez. When Talavera was created Bishop of Granada, Isabel needed a new principal confessor; and, as usual in such matters, consulted the Cardinal Primate of Spain, Mendoza, who years before had been Bishop of Sigüenza, and had made Father Jimenez his chaplain and vicar-general, because his rival archbishop, that stout old rebel Carrillo, had persecuted the lowly priest. Mendoza knew that his former vicar-general had retired from the world, and was living in self-inflicted suffering and mortification; and he was wont to say that such a man was born to rule, and not to hide himself as an anchorite in a cloister. When, after the surrender of Granada, a new royal confessor was required, Jimenez, greatly to his dismay, real or assumed, was at the instance of the Cardinal summoned to see the Queen. Austere and poorly clad, he stood before the sovereign whom he was afterwards to rule, and fervently begged her to save him from the threatened honour. In vain he urged his unfitness for the life of a court, his want of cultivation and the arts of the world; his humility was to Isabel a further recommendation, and she would take no denial.

Thenceforward the pale emaciated figure, in a frayed and soiled Franciscan frock, stalked like a spectre amidst the splendours that surrounded the Queen; feared for his stern rectitude and his iron strength of will. His mind was full, even then, of great plans to reform the order of Saint Francis, corrupted as he had seen it was in the cloisters; and when the office of Provincial of the Order became vacant soon afterwards the new Confessor accepted it eagerly. Through all Castile, to every monastery of the Order, Jimenez rode on a poor mule with one attendant and no luggage; living mostly upon herbs and roots by the way. When, at last, Isabel recalled him peremptorily to her side, he painted to her so black a picture of the shameful licence and luxury of the friars, that the Queen, horrified at such impiety, vowed to sustain her Confessor in the work of reform. It was a hard fought battle; for the Priors were rich and powerful, and in many cases were strongly supported from Rome. All sorts of influences were brought to bear. Ferdinand was besought to mitigate the reforming zeal of Isabel and Jimenez, and did his best to do so. The Prior of the Holy Ghost in Segovia boldly took Isabel to task personally, and told her that her Confessor was unfit for his post. When Isabel asked the insolent friar whether he knew what he was talking about he replied, 'Yes, and I know that I am speaking to Queen Isabel, who is dust and ashes as I am.' But all was unavailing, the broom wielded by Jimenez and the Queen swept through every monastery and convent in the land; the Queen herself taking the nunneries in hand, and with gentle firmness examining for herself the circumstances in every case before compelling a rigid adherence to the conventual vows. When Mendoza died in January

1495, the greatest ecclesiastical benefice in the world after the papacy, the Archbishopric of Toledo, became vacant. Ferdinand wanted it for his illegitimate son, Alfonso of Aragon, aged twenty-four, who had been Archbishop of Saragossa since he was six. But Toledo was in the Queen's gift, and to her husband's indignation she insisted upon appointing Jimenez. The Pope, Alexander VI., who had just conferred the title of 'Catholic' upon the Spanish sovereigns, was by birth a Valencian subject of Ferdinand; and there was a race of the rival Spanish claimants to win the support of Rome. But Castile had right as well as might on his side this time, and, again to his expressed displeasure, Jimenez became primate of Spain, and the greatest man in the land after the King who distrusted him.[1]

From their births Ferdinand had destined his children to be instruments in his great scheme for humbling France for the benefit of Aragon; and Isabel, in this respect, appears usually to have let him have his way. It was a complicated and tortuous way, which, in a history of the Queen, cannot be fully described. Suffice it to say that when Ferdinand found himself by the fall of Granada free to take his own affairs seriously in hand, he had for years been intriguing for political marriage for his children. First

[1] It is related that the Queen concealed from Jimenez her intention to make him Primate, and handed him unexpectedly the papal bull addressed to him as: The venerable brother Francisco Jimenez de Cisneros, Archbishop-elect of Toledo. When the friar saw the superscription he dropped the document and fled, crying, This bull is not for me. He was pursued and caught two leagues from Madrid by envoys from Isabel, and still refused the great preferment on the ground of his unworthiness. He stood out for six months until Isabel obtained from the Pope a peremptory command to him to accept the archbishopric, and even then he insisted that the vast revenues should be used for pious and charitable purposes.

he had endeavoured to capture the young King of France, Charles VIII., on his accession in 1483, by a marriage with Isabel, the eldest daughter of Spain. Charles VIII. was already betrothed to Margaret of Burgundy, but Anne of Brittany, with her French dominion, was preferred to either, and then (1488) Ferdinand, finding himself forestalled, betrothed his youngest daughter, Katharine, to Arthur, Prince of Wales, to win the support of Henry Tudor in a war against France,[1] to prevent the absorption of Brittany. All parties were dishonest; but Ferdinand outwitted allies and rivals alike. Henry VII. of England was cajoled into invading France; whilst Ferdinand, instead of making war on his side as arranged, quietly extorted from the fears of Charles VIII. an offensive and defensive alliance against the world, with the retrocession to Aragon of the counties of Roussillon and Cerdagne; and England was left in the lurch.

There is no doubt that the object of the King of France in signing such a treaty was to buy the implied acquiescence of Ferdinand in making good his shadowy claims to the kingdom of Naples, then ruled by the unpopular kinsman of Ferdinand himself. As was proved soon afterwards, nothing was further from Ferdinand's thoughts than thus to aid the ambition of the shallow, vain King of France in the precise direction where he wished to check it. But in appearance the great festivities held in Barcelona on the signature of the treaty in January 1493, heralded a cordial settlement of the long-standing enmity between the two rivals. Isabel took her share in the rejoicings; and rigid bigots appear to have written to her

[1] A full account of these complicated intrigues will be found in the present writer's 'Wives of Henry VIII.'

late Confessor, Archbishop Talavera, an exaggerated account of her participation in the gaiety. Isabel, in answer to the letter of reprimand he sent her, defended herself with spirit and dignity, after a preface expressing humble submission. 'You say that some danced who ought not to have danced; but if that is intended to convey that I danced, I can only say that it is not true; I have little custom of dancing, and I had no thought of such a thing. . . . The new masks you complain of were worn neither by me nor by my ladies; and not one dress was put on that had not been worn ever since we came to Aragon. The only dress I wore had, indeed, been seen by the Frenchmen before, and was my silk one with three bands of gold, made as plainly as possible. This was all my part of the festivity. Of the grand array and showy garments you speak of, I saw nothing and knew nothing until I read your letter. The visitors who came may have worn such fine things when they appeared; but I know of no others. As for the French people supping with the ladies at table, that is a thing they are accustomed to do. They do not get the custom from us; but when their great guests dine with sovereigns, the others in their train dine at tables in the hall with the ladies and gentlemen; and there are no separate tables for ladies. The Burgundians, the English and the Portuguese, also follow this custom; and we on similar occasions to this. So there is no more evil in it, nor bad repute, than in asking guests to your own table. I say this, that you may see that there was no innovation in what we did; nor did we think we were doing anything wrong in it. . . . But if it be found wrong after the inquiry I will make, it will be better to discontinue it in future. The dresses of the gentle-

men were truly very costly, and I did not commend them, and, indeed, moderated them as much as I could, and advised them not to have such garments made. As for the Bull feasts, I feel, with you, though perhaps not quite so strongly. But after I had consented to them, I had the fullest determination never to attend them again in my life, nor to be where they were held. I do not say that I can of myself abolish them; for that does not appertain to me alone, nor do I defend them, for I have never found pleasure in them.[1] When you know the truth of what really took place, you may determine whether it be evil, in which case it had better be discontinued. For my part all excess is distasteful to me, and I am wearied with all festivity, as I have written you in a long letter, which I have not sent, nor will I do so, until I know whether, by God's grace, you are coming to meet us in Castile.'[2]

This letter gives a good idea of Isabel's submission to her spiritual advisers, as well as of her own good sense and moderation, which prevented her from giving blind obedience to them. Another instance of this is seen by Isabel's attitude towards the chapter of Toledo Cathedral after the death of her friend Cardinal Mendoza (January 1495), the third King of Spain, as he had been called. The Queen travelled from Madrid to Guadalajara to be with him at his death, and tended him to the last, promising, personally, to act as his executor, and to see that all his testamentary wishes were fulfilled. Amongst these was the desire of the prelate to be buried in a

[1] Father Florez quotes a remark of Isabel, on another occasion, warmly approving of the bull-fight, 'which, though foreigners who have not seen it condemn as barbarous, she considered it very different, and as a diversion where valour and dexterity shine.'

[2] Florez, 'Reinas Catolicos.'

certain spot in the chancel of the cathedral. To this the chapter had readily assented in the life of the archbishop, but when he had died they refused to allow the structural alterations necessary, and the matter was carried to the tribunals, which decided in favour of the executors. The chapter still stood firm in their refusal, and then the Queen, as chief executrix, took the matter in her own hands, and herself superintended the necessary demolition of the wall of the chapel at night, to the surprise and dismay of the chapter, who no longer dared to interfere.[1]

On leaving Aragon after the signature of the hollow Treaty of Barcelona (1493), Isabel and her husband took up their residence in the Alcazar of Madrid, where, with short intervals, they remained in residence for the next six years. During this period, spent, as will be told by Ferdinand, in almost constant struggle for his own objects in Italy and elsewhere, Isabel was tireless in her efforts for domestic reform. The purification of the monasteries and convents went on continually under the zealous incentive of the new Archbishop of Toledo, Jimenez: the roads and water-sources throughout Castile were improved; the municipal authorities, corrupt as they had become by the introduction of the purchase of offices, and the effects of noble intrigue, were brought under royal inspection and control; and this, though it improved the government of the towns, further sapped their independence and legislative power. The Universities and high schools, which had shared in the universal decadence, were overhauled, and a higher standard of graduation enforced: the coinage, which had become hopelessly debased, in consequence of the vast number of noble

[1] Montero de los Rios 'Historia de Madrid.'

and municipal mints in existence, was unified and rehabilitated: sumptuary pragmatics, mistaken as they appear to us now, but well-intentioned at the time, endeavoured to restrain extravagance and idle vanity: measures for promoting agriculture, the great cloth industry of Segovia and oversea commerce, and a score of other similar enactments during these years, from 1494 to the end of the century, show how catholic and patriotic was Isabel's activity at the time that Ferdinand was busy with his own Aragonese plans. The annals of Madrid at this period give a curious account of Isabel's prowess in another direction. The neighbourhood of the capital was infested with bears, and one particular animal, of special size and ferocity, had committed much damage. By order of the Queen a special battue was organised, and the bear was killed by a javelin in the hands of Isabel herself, upon the spot where now stands the hermitage of St. Isidore, the patron of Madrid.[1]

Ferdinand's marvellous political perspicacity, and the far-reaching combinations he had formed, now began to produce some of the international results for which he had worked. The Treaty of Barcelona had bound Ferdinand to friendship with France, and abstention from marrying his children in England, Germany or Naples, and implied the leaving to Charles VIII. of a free hand in Italy: but no sooner had Ferdinand received his reward by the retrocession of Roussillon and Cerdagne to him, than he broke all his obligations under the treaty. Charles VIII. had marched through Italy, to the intense anger of the native princes, and took possession of Naples, and then Ferdinand, in coalition with the Valencian Pope,

[1] Oviedo.

Alexander VI., formed the combination of Venice, and Spanish troops under the great Castilian, Gonzalo de Cordova, expelled the French from Naples, and set up the deposed Aragonese-Neapolitan king, until it should please, as it soon did, Ferdinand to seize the realm for himself.

This war was an awakening to all Europe that a new fighting nation had entered into the arena. Already the proud spirit of superiority by divine selection was being felt by Spaniards as a result of the religious persecution of the minority, and the devotional exaltation inspired by the example of the Queen: and under so great a commander as Gonzalo de Cordova Spanish troops for the first time now showed the qualities which, for a century at least, made them invincible.[1] Whilst this result attended the policy of Isabel and her husband in religious affairs, their action in another direction simultaneously, whilst for the moment seeming to give to Ferdinand the hegemony of Europe, really wrought the ruin of Spain by bringing her into the vortex of central European politics, and burdening her with the championship of an impossible cause under impossible conditions.

[1] Ferdinand had wished to appoint an Aragonese commander, but as Castile was defraying most of the expenses of the war, Isabel insisted upon a Castilian being appointed.

CHAPTER III

AMIDST infinite chicanery and baseness on both sides the marriage treaty of Isabel's youngest daughter, Katharine, with Arthur, Prince of Wales, had been alternately confirmed and relaxed, as suited Ferdinand's interests. But he took care that it could be at any time revived when need should demand it. This made Ferdinand always able to deal a diverting blow upon France in the Channel. But Ferdinand's main stroke of policy was the double marriage of his children, Juan, Prince of Asturias, with the Archduchess Margaret, daughter of Maximilian, sovereign of the Holy Roman Empire; and of Joan, Isabel's second daughter, with Philip, Maximilian's son, and, by right of his mother, sovereign of the dominions of the Dukes of Burgundy with Holland and Flanders; whilst Isabel's eldest daughter, already the widow of the Portuguese prince, Alfonso, was betrothed to his cousin, King Emmanuel. Imagination is dazzled at the prospect opened out by these marriages. The children of Philip and Joan would hold the fine harbours of Flanders, and would hem in France by the possession of Artois, Burgundy, Luxembourg, and the Franche Comté; whilst their possession of the imperial crown and the German dominions of the house of Hapsburg would identify their interests with those of Ferdinand in checking the French advance

towards Italy. On the other side of the Channel the grandchildren of Ferdinand and Isabel would rule England, and hold the narrow sea; whilst the friendship between England and Scotland, prompted by Ferdinand, and the marriage of Margaret Tudor with James IV., deprived France of her ancient northern ally. The King of Aragon might then, with the assurance of success, extend his grasp from Sicily to the East, and become the master of the world. The plan was a splendid one; and for a time it went merry as the marriage bells that heralded it. With his family seated on the Portuguese throne, Ferdinand had, moreover, no attack to fear on that side from French intrigue, such as had often been attempted; and for a brief period it seemed as if all heaven had smiled upon the astute King of Aragon.

Isabel had always been an exemplary mother to her children, who, on their side, were deeply devoted to her. She had rarely allowed them to be separated from her, even during her campaigns; and had herself cared for their education in letters, music, and the arts under the most accomplished masters in Europe.[1] When they had to be sacrificed one by one for the political ends of their father, Isabel's love as a mother almost overcame her sense of duty as a queen, and in the autumn of 1496 she travelled through Spain with a heavy heart to take leave of her seventeen-year old daughter, Joan, for whom a great fleet of 120 sail was waiting in the port of Laredo, near Santander. The King was away in Catalonia preparing his war with France; the times were disturbed, and a strong navy with 15,000 armed men were needed to escort the young bride to Flanders, the home of her husband,

[1] Clemencin. 'Elogio.'

Philip of Burgundy, heir of the empire, and to bring back to Spain the betrothed of Prince Juan, Philip's sister, Margaret, who, in her infancy, had been allied to the faithless Charles VIII. of France. For two nights after the embarkation Isabel slept on the ship with her daughter, loath to part with her, as it seemed, for ever; and when, at last, the fleet sailed, on the 22nd August 1496, the mother, in the deepest grief, turned her back upon the sea, and rode sadly to Burgos to await tidings of her daughter.

Storms and disasters innumerable assailed the fleet. Driven by tempest into Portland, one of the largest of the ships came into collision and foundered; and though the young Archduchess received every courtesy and attention from the English gentry, she was not even yet at the end of her troubles; for on the Flemish coast another great ship was wrecked, with most of her household, trousseau, and jewels. Eventually the whole fleet arrived at Ramua, sorely disabled, and needing a long delay for refitting before it could return to Spain with the bride of Isabel's heir.[1] Whilst Joan was being married, with all the pomp traditional in the house of Burgundy, to her handsome, good-for-nothing husband, Philip, at Lille, Queen Isabel, at Burgos, in the deepest distress, was mourning for the loss of her own distraught mother, as well as for her daughter.[2] Every post from Flanders brought the Queen evil news. The fleet that had carried Joan over, and was refitting to bring Margaret to Spain, was mostly unseaworthy: Philip neglected and ill-treated his

[1] Zurita, 'Anales,' and Padilla, 'Cronica de Felipe I.'

[2] The Spanish chroniclers complain bitterly of Philip's slowness in coming to meet his bride. He was in Tyrol when she arrived in Flanders, and spent nearly a month in joining her at Lille. From the first the love was all on poor Joan's side.

wife's countrymen to the extent of allowing 9000 of the men on the fleet at Antwerp to die from cold and privation, without trying to help them; already his young wife was complaining of his conduct. Her Spanish household were unpaid; and even the income settled upon her by Philip was withheld, on the pretext that Ferdinand had not fulfilled his part of the bargain, which was, of course, true.

At length, after what seemed interminable delay, the Archduchess Margaret arrived at Santander early in March 1497. Ferdinand, with a great train of nobles, received his future daughter-in-law as she stepped upon Spanish soil, and a few days later Queen Isabel welcomed her in the palace of Burgos, where, with greater rejoicing than had ever been seen in Castile, the heir of Ferdinand and Isabel was married to gentle Margaret, one of the finest characters of her time. Seven months afterwards the Prince of Asturias, at the age of twenty-one, was borne to his grave, and his wife gave birth to a dead child.[1] The blow was one from which Isabel never recovered. Juan was her only son, her 'angel,' from the time of his birth; and the dearest wish of her heart had been the unification of Spain under him and his descendants. The next heiress was Isabel, her eldest daughter, just (August 1497) married to King Emmanuel of Portugal, and the jealous Aragonese and Catalans would hardly brook a woman sovereign; and, above all, one ruling

[1] Ferdinand, it is related, fearing that the sudden news of Juan's death would kill Isabel with grief, caused her to be told that it was her husband, Ferdinand himself, that had died, so that when he presented himself before her, the—as he supposed—lesser grief of her son's death should be mitigated by learning that her husband was alive. The experiment does not appear to have been very successful, as Isabel was profoundly affected when she heard the truth. (*Florez*, 'Reinas Catolicos').

from Portugal, when Ferdinand should die.[1] Hastily Cortes of Castile was summoned at Toledo, and swore allegiance to the new heiress and her Portuguese husband as princes of Asturias in April 1498, but she, too, died in childbed in August, when the heirship devolved upon her infant son, Miguel, who, if he had lived, would have united not only Spain, but all the Iberian Peninsula under one rule. But it was not to be, and the babe followed his mother to the grave in a few months.

Troubles fell thick and fast upon Isabel and her husband. Death within three years had made cruel sport of all their plans; and the support of England, long held in the balance by Ferdinand, to be bought when it was worth the price demanded, had now to be obtained almost at any cost. The price had increased considerably; for Henry Tudor was as keen a hand at a bargain as Ferdinand of Aragon, and closely watched events. With the usual grasping dishonesty on both sides, the treaty for the marriage of Isabel's youngest daughter, Katharine, to the heir of England was again signed and sealed, and the young couple were married by proxy in May 1499. But Katharine was young. Her mother could hardly bring herself to part with her last-born, and send her for ever to a far country amongst strangers; and she fought hard for two years longer to delay her daughter's going, with all manner of conditions and claims as to her future life. At length Henry of England put his foot down, and said

[1] In fact the Cortes of Aragon obstinately refused to swear allegiance to the Infanta Isabel as heiress when she went to Saragossa for the purpose in the autumn; and she was kept there in great distress until her expected child should be born, which, if it were a male, would receive the oath of the Cortes. The anxiety and worry consequent upon this killed the Infanta (Queen of Portugal) in the birth of her child Miguel in August.

he would wait no longer; and, worse still, he hinted that he would marry Arthur elsewhere, and throw his influence on the side of Philip of Burgundy, Ferdinand's son-in-law, in the struggle that was already looming on the horizon. Isabel and her daughter both knew that the latter was being sent to serve her father's political interests against her own sister and brother-in-law; but, from her birth, Katharine had been brought up in her mother's atmosphere of uncompromising duty, surrounded by the ecstatic devotion which demanded serene personal sacrifice for higher ends; and, on the 21st May 1501, the Princess of Aragon bade a last farewell to her mother in the elfin palace of the Alhambra, to see her no more in her life of martyrdom.[1]

Isabel's health was already breaking down with labour and trouble. Disappointment faced her from every side, and as tribulations fell, bringing her end nearer, and ever nearer, the stern religious zeal that inflamed her grew more eager to do its work in her day. She had never been a weakling, as we have seen. From her youth the persecution of infidels had been as grateful to her sense of duty, as the crushing of her worldly opponents had been satisfying to her love of undisputed dominion. In all Castile, no man but her confessor, and he at his peril, had dared to say her nay; but at this juncture, when health was failing and her strength on the wane, there came to her tidings from across the sea that turned her heart to stone. Joan, her daughter, had always been somewhat wayward and rebellious at the gloomy, devout tone that pervaded her mother's life, and Isabel had coerced her, on some occasions by forcible means, to

[1] Her story is told in 'The Wives of Henry VIII.,' by the present writer.

take her part in the religious observances that occupied so large a share of attention at the Spanish court.[1]

Joan was young and bright: the life in her palace at Brussels was free from the gloom that hung over crusading Castile. Philip, her husband, cared for little but pleasure, and, though he was but a faithless husband, she was desperately in love with him. The new culture, moreover, which had even found its way, with Peter Martyr, into Isabel's court, had, in rich, prosperous Flanders, brought with it the freedom of thought and judgment that naturally came from the wider horizon of knowledge that men gained by it, and doubtless the change from the rigid and uncomfortable sanctimony of her native land to the gay and debonair society of Flanders had seemed to Joan like coming out of the darkness into the daylight. The Spanish priests who surrounded her sounded a note of warning to Isabel only a few months after Joan had arrived in Flanders. She was said to be lax in her religious duties: her old confessor, who continued to write to her fervent exhortations to preserve the faith as it was held in Spain, could get no reply to any of his letters, and he learnt that the gay Parisian priests, who flocked in the festive court, were leading Joan astray.

Isabel sent a confidential priest, Friar Matienzo, to Flanders to examine and report on all these, and the like accusations. He saw Joan in August 1498, and found her, as he says, more handsome and buxom than ever, though far advanced in pregnancy; but when he began to press her about religion, though she had plenty of reasons ready for what she did, she was as obstinate as her mother could be in holding

[1] 'Spanish State Papers.' Calendar, Supplement to vol. i. p. 405.

her own way. She refused to confess at the bidding of the friar, to accept any confessor appointed by her mother, or to dismiss the French priests who were with her, and the friar sent the dire news to Isabel that her daughter had a hard heart and no true piety.[1]

This was bad enough, but on the death of the Queen of Portugal, Isabel's eldest daughter and heiress, leaving her infant son as heir to the united crowns, Philip assumed for himself and his wife, Joan, the title of Prince and Princess of Castile. This was a warning for Ferdinand.[2] Already Philip and his father, the Emperor Maximilian, had shown that they had no idea of being the tools of Ferdinand's foreign policy, but if Philip of Burgundy successfully asserted Joan's right to succeed her mother as Queen of Castile, then all Ferdinand's edifice of hope fell like a house of cards, for most of Spain would be governed by a foreigner, with other ends and methods, and poor, isolated Aragon, by itself, must sink into insignificance.

When the infant Portuguese heir, Miguel, died, early in 1499, the issue between Ferdinand and his son-in-law was joined. Isabel was visibly failing, and it was seen would die before her husband, in which case Joan would be Queen of Castile, in right of her mother. Philip, her husband, with the riches of

[1] 'Calendar of Spanish State Papers,' Supplement to vol. i. 'Reports of the Sub-Prior of Santa Cruz to Isabel.'

[2] Ferdinand sent at once an envoy to remonstrate with Maximilian about his son's pretensions, but it was soon seen that Maximilian and his son were entirely in accord. Maximilian had the effrontery to claim the crown of Portugal in right of his mother, Doña Leonor of Portugal, and the crown of Castile for Juana, in preference to any daughter that might be born to her eldest sister, Isabel of Portugal. Ferdinand's enemy, the King of France, naturally supported these pretensions, which were really put forward at the time to thwart Ferdinand, whose plans in Italy were now seen to threaten the suzerainty of the empire over some of the Italian States.

Flanders and Burgundy, and the prestige of the empire behind him, would come, perhaps in alliance with the French, and reduce greedy, ambitious Ferdinand to the petty crown of Aragon. Thenceforward it was war to the knife between father and son-in-law, who hated each other bitterly; and Isabel's distrust of her daughter Joan grew deeper as religious zeal and ambition for a united Spain joined in adding fuel to the fire. With true statesmanship Isabel, under the great influence of Jimenez, clung more desperately than ever to the idea of a Spain absolutely united. Ferdinand's object in working for the consolidation of the realms had always been to forward the traditional objects of Aragon in humbling France, but those of Isabel and Jimenez were different. To them the spread of Christianity in the dark places of the earth, for the greater glory of Castile, was the end to be gained by a united Spain, and for that end it was necessary that the people should be unified in orthodoxy as well as in sovereignty. The cruel and disastrous expulsion of the Jews[1] served this object in Isabel's mind, though to Ferdinand its principal advantage was the filling of his war chest. The squandering of Castilian blood and treasure in Naples and Sicily was to Isabel and Jimenez a means of strengthening the Spaniards in their future Christianisation of north Africa, whilst to Ferdinand it meant the future domination of Italy, the Adriatic, and gaining the trade of the Levant for Barcelona.

When Isabel and her husband went to Granada,

[1] As showing how unrelenting was Isabel's determination to exterminate infidelity in the whole Peninsula at the time, it may be mentioned that one of the conditions of the marriage of her eldest widowed daughter Isabel to the King of Portugal in 1497, was that every Jew should be expelled from Portugal.

after a long absence, in 1499, with the all-powerful Jimenez in his dirty, coarse, Franciscan gown, the difference of view of the husband and wife was again seen. The Moors of Granada had lived, since their capitulation, contented and prosperous in the enjoyment of toleration for their customs and faith under the sympathetic rule of the Christian governor, the Count of Tendilla, and the ardent, but always diplomatic, religious propaganda of Archbishop Talavera. If these two men had been allowed to continue their gentle system for a generation, there is no doubt that in time Granada would have become Christian without bloodshed, even if it had retained its Arabic speech. But Jimenez and the Queen could not wait, and determined upon methods more rapid than those of Talavera. In the seven years that had passed since Granada surrendered to Isabel, the crown of Spain had become much more powerful. The prestige and wealth of the sovereigns had been increased; the discovery of America had considerably added to the importance of Castile, whilst the expulsion of the French from Naples had magnified Aragon. The Jews had been expelled from Spain, and, above all, the Inquisition, under the ruthless Torquemada, had raised the arrogance both of people and priests on the strength of the stainless orthodoxy of Spain.

Jimenez doubtless felt that the circumstances demanded, or at least excused, stronger measures towards the Moslems in Granada. He soon persuaded or stultified Talavera, and set about converting the Moors wholesale. Bribery, persuasion, flattery, were the first instruments employed, then threats and severity. Thousands of Moors were thus brought to baptism, with what sincerity may be supposed.

Jimenez, a book lover himself, and afterwards the munificent inspirer of the polyglot Bible in his splendid new University of Alcalá, committed the vandalism of burning the priceless Arabic manuscripts that had been collected by generations of scholars in Granada. Five thousand magnificently illuminated copies of the Koran were cast into the flames, whilst many thousands of ancient Greek, Hebrew, and Arabic texts were sacrificed to the blind bigotry and haste of Jimenez and Isabel, who, even in learning, drew the line at Christian writings. From sacrificing books to sacrificing men was but a step for Jimenez. Isabel and her husband had sworn to allow full toleration to the Moors, but what were oaths of monarchs as against the presumed interests of the faith? Soon the dungeon, the rack, and the thumbscrew came to fortify Jimenez's propaganda, and, though the Moslems bowed their heads before irresistible force, they cursed beneath their breath the day they had trusted to the oath of Christian sovereigns.

The absence of Ferdinand and Isabel in Seville early in 1500, gave to Jimenez full freedom; and soon the strained cord snapped, and the outraged Moors rebelled. Like a spark upon tinder an excess of insolence on the part of one of Jimenez's myrmidons set all Granada in a blaze; and the Primate was besieged in his palace, in imminent danger of death. He acted with stern courage even then, and refused to escape until Count de Tendilla with the soldiery dispersed the populace, and drove them into their own quarter, the Albaicin. There they were impregnable, and Tendilla, who was popular, with Talavera, even more beloved, took their lives in their hands, and unarmed and bareheaded entered the Albaicin to reassure the Moors.

'We do not rise,' cried the latter, 'against their highnesses, but only to defend their own signatures,'[1] and the beloved Archbishop and Governor, who left his own wife and children in the Albaicin as hostages of peace, soothed the Moors into quietude almost as soon as the storm had burst.

The news flew rapidly to Seville, though Jimenez's version was not the first to arrive, and when he heard it, Ferdinand turned in anger to Isabel. 'See here, madam,' he said, handing her the paper, 'our victories, earned with so much Spanish blood, are thus ruined in a moment by the rashness and obstinacy of your Archbishop.'[2] Isabel herself wrote in grave sorrow to Jimenez, deploring that he had given her no proper explanation of what had happened; and after sending his faithful vicar, Ruiz, to placate the monarchs somewhat, the Archbishop himself appeared before the Queen and her husband. He was a man of tremendous power. Over Isabel his religious influence was great, and he proved now that he knew how to get at the weak side of Ferdinand. The Moors, he urged, had been converted by thousands; and so far, his work had been successful. But rebellion on the part of subjects could never be condoned, no matter what the cause, and he appealed to both sovereigns only to pardon Granada for its revolt on condition that every Moor should become a Christian or leave Spain. It was a shameful violation of a sacred pledge given only seven years before, but the rising of the Albaicin was the salve which Jimenez applied to the wounded honour of his Queen and King.

[1] Marmol Carbajal, 'Rebelion of Castigo de los Moros de Granada,'

[2] Marmol Carbajal. It will be recollected that Ferdinand had opposed Jimenez's appointment, as he wanted the archbishopric and primacy for his son.

To Granada he returned triumphant, with the fell decree in the pocket of his shabby grey gown. More converts flocked in than ever when the alternative was presented to them. But up in the wild Alpujarras, the Moslem villagers and farmers looked with hatred and dismay at the lax townsmen abandoning Allah and his only prophet at the bidding of a ragged, sour-faced priest who broke his monarch's word. Like an avalanche the mountaineers swept down from their fastnesses upon Malaga, beating back the Christian force from Granada which came to rescue the city. But Ferdinand from Seville and the greatest soldier in Europe, Gonzalo de Cordova, hastened with an army to crush the desperate handful who had defied an empire; and every Moor in arms, with many women and children, were pitilessly massacred. The repression was carried out with a savage ferocity and heartlessness only equalled by the despairing bravery of the insurgents; but at last, by the end of 1500, the few who were still left unconverted were brought to their knees: all except the fierce mountaineers of Ronda, a separate African tribe, notable even to-day for their lawlessness and indomitable independence. From their savage fortress over the gorge they repelled one Christian force after another, until Ferdinand himself, with vengeance in his heart against all rebels, came with an army strong enough to crush them. A ruinous ransom and instant conversion were dictated to them, and confiscation and death, or deportation to Africa, for those who hesitated.

Then came the turn of Granada itself. Jimenez and the new Inquisitor-General, Deza, the friend of Colon, demanded of Isabel and Ferdinand the establishment of the Inquisition in the city. This was considered too flagrant a violation of all promises; but what was re-

fused in the letter was granted in the spirit; and the Inquisition of Cordova was given power to extend its operations over Granada. What followed will always remain a blot upon the name of Isabel, who with Jimenez was principally responsible. In July 1501, she with her husband issued a decree forbidding the Moslem faith throughout the kingdom of Granada, on pain of death and confiscation; and in February 1502, the wicked edict went forth, that the entire Moslem population, men, women, and all children of over twelve years, should quit the realm within two months, whilst they were forbidden to go to a Mahommedan country. Whither were the poor wretches to go but to Africa, opposite their own shores? and some found their way there. This was a pretext a few months afterwards for prohibiting any one to emigrate from Spain at all; and such Moors as still remained in Spain had only the alternatives of compulsory conversion or death.[1] By the end of 1502 not a single professed Moslem was left in Spain; and Isabel, with saintly joy in her heart, could thank God that she had done her duty, and that in her own day the miracle had come to pass: the Jews expelled, the Moors 'converted,' the Inquisition scourging religious doubt with thongs of flame; all men in very fear bowing their heads to one symbol and muttering one creed. This was indeed a victory to be proud of, and it made Spain what it was and what it is.

To Isabel, in broken health and sad bereavement, it was the one ray of glory that gilded all her sorrow. Not the least of her troubles were those arising from her new domain across the sea. The impossible terms insisted upon by the discoverer had, as we have seen, been accepted with the greatest unwillingness by Fer-

[1] Ulick Burke, 'History of Spain.' Edited by Martin Hume.

dinand, and probably with no intention of fulfilling them; and when Colon began to prepare his second expedition on a great scale, and thousands of adventurers craved to accompany him, the King realised the danger that threatened his own plans in Europe if such an exodus continued; and, at the same time, the tremendous power that this foreign sailor, now Admiral of the Indies and perpetual Spanish Viceroy, with riches untold, would hold in his hands. So the process of undermining him began. The Council of the Indies was formed to control all matters connected with the new domain, and the priests that ruled it obstructed and thwarted the Admiral at every turn. Isabel was mainly concerned in winning her new subjects to Christianity; and four friars went this time in the fleet to baptise. All of them but his friend Marchena were disloyal to the chief, and so were the crowd of Aragonese who accompanied the expedition. Of the fifteen hundred adventurers who at last were selected, the great majority were greedy, reckless men whom the end of the Moorish war had left idle.

At first the news from Colon on his second voyage were bright and hopeful. New lands, richer than ever, were discovered, and the prospects of coming wealth from this source, whilst delighting the King, only made the downfall of the Admiral more inevitable. But soon the merciless violence of the colonists provoked reprisals, and every ship that returned to Spain brought to Isabel bitter complaints of Colon's rapacity and tyranny; whilst he, on his side, denounced the want of discipline, of industry, and of justice, on the part of those who were rapidly turning a heaven into a hell. At length the complaints, both of friars and laymen, against the high-handed Admiral of the Indies, became

so violent that the sovereigns summoned him to Spain to give some explanation of the position. Colon saw the Queen at Burgos in 1496, and found her, at least, full of sympathy for him in his difficulties, and still firmly convinced that his golden hopes would be fulfilled. But the reaction had set in against the extravagant expectations aroused by his second expedition. The idlers, many of them, had come back disappointed, fever-stricken and empty-handed, and had much evil to say of the despotic Italian who had lorded over land granted by the Viceregent of Christ at Rome to the Spanish sovereigns; and though Isabel herself, full of zeal for winning all Asia, as she thought, for the faith, did her best, the treasury was empty after the wars of Granada and Italy, and the heavy expense of the royal marriages then in progress.

Amidst infinite obstruction from the Council of the Indies, and with little but frowning looks from Ferdinand, Colon's third expedition was painfully and slowly fitted out. Few adventurers were anxious to go now; and condemned criminals had to be enlisted for the service; but, withal, at length in May 1498, the Admiral sailed on his third voyage to his new land. When he arrived at his centre, the isle of Hispanola (Haiti), he found that a successful revolt of the lawless ruffians he had left behind had overturned all semblance of order and discipline. The mines were unworked, the fields untilled, the natives atrociously tortured, and violence everywhere paramount. Isabel's verbal instructions to the Admiral when she took leave of him had been precise. Her first object, she said, was to convert the Indians to Christianity, and to carry to them from Spain, not slavery and oppression, but the gentle, Christian,

virtues. This doubtless to some extent was the desire of Colon himself, with his mystic devotional soul, though wholesale slavery of natives was part of his system, and he set about his work of the reconciliation of the Indians, whose horrible sufferings had driven them to armed opposition or flight. The undisciplined Spaniards had the whip hand, and the Admiral could only with much diplomacy, and perhaps unwise concessions to them, at length bring some semblance of peace and order to the colony. But mild as his methods were on the occasion, they were bitterly resented by arrogant Spaniards, indignant that a foreigner should wield sovereign powers over them in their own Queen's territory.

Complaints and accusations more bitter than ever came to the King and Queen by every ship. The men who returned to Spain assured Ferdinand that Colon was sacrificing every interest to his own insatiable greed; and Isabel, favourably disposed as she was to the discoverer generally, at length lost patience when she found that he was shipping cargoes of Indians to Spain to be sold for slaves. To enslave infidels was not usually held to be wrong, and Colon considered it a legitimate source of profit: but Isabel's new subjects, mild and gentle as they were, had been looked upon by her as actual or potential Christians, and her indignation was great when she saw that Colon was treating them indifferently as chattels of his own.[1] At length it was decided to send an envoy to Hispanola, with full powers to inquire into affairs and to take possession of all property and dispose of all persons in the new territories. The man chosen thus to exercise unrestrained power was Francisco de

[1] Las Casas.

Bobadilla, probably a relative of the Queen's great friend, Beatriz de Bobadilla, Marchioness of Moya; but in any case an intolerant tyrant, who considered it his business, as, by Ferdinand, it was probably intended to be, to degrade the Admiral in any case. With unexampled insolence and harshness, he loaded the great explorer with manacles almost as soon as he arrived in Hispanola; and then, whilst Colon lay in prison, the whole of the charges against him were raked together, and, without any attempt to sift them judicially, were embodied in an act of accusation, and sent to Spain by the same caravel as that which carried in chains the exalted visionary, whose dream had enriched Castile with a new world.

The shameful home-coming of Colon in December 1500, struck the imagination and shocked the conscience of the people; and Isabel herself was one of the first to express her indignation. She and Ferdinand were at Granada at the time, and sent to the illustrious prisoner a dignified letter of regret, ordering him at once to be released, supplied with funds, and to present himself before them. The Queen received him in her palace of the Alhambra, and as he stood before his sovereign, with his bared white head bowed in grief and shame for the insult that had eaten into his very soul,[1] Isabel lost her usual calm serenity and wept, whereupon the Admiral himself broke down, and he cast himself at the foot of the throne that he had so nobly endowed. The title of Admiral was restored to him: though in his stead as Viceroy was sent out Nicolas de Ovando, with thirty-two vessels and a

[1] Colon's son, Ferdinand, says that he ordered his fetters to be buried with him: but this does not appear to have been done. His bitter indignation is expressed by his son, Fernando, and in Colon's 'Letter to the Nurse.'

great company of gentlemen. But disaster overtook the fleet; and, though Ovando arrived, most of the ships and men were lost, and thenceforward Isabel's zeal for maritime adventure grew cooler.

The cost and drain of men for the enterprise had been very great. The fame of the discovery had rung through the world, and had exalted Isabel and Castile as they had never been exalted before, but up to this period the returns in money had been insignificant, whilst the unsettling influence of the adventure upon the nation at large had been very injurious. Ferdinand, for reasons already explained, always regarded it coldly; and the loss of Ovando's fleet seemed to prove him right. When, therefore, Colon begged for the Queen's aid to sail with a fourth expedition early in 1502, she was unwilling to help; though she was sufficiently his friend still to prevent others from hindering him; and he sailed for the last time in March 1502, to see his patroness no more; for when he came back, two years and nine months later, broken with injustice, and with death in his heart, Isabel the Catholic was dead.

Even greater sorrows than those of America came to Isabel in her last years, troubles that stabbed her to the very heart, and from which one of the great tragedies of history grew. From Flanders came tidings of grave import for the future of the edifice so laboriously reared by Ferdinand and Isabel. The heiress of Spain, the Archduchess Joan, with her cynical, evil-minded husband, Philip the Handsome, were daily drifting further away from the influence of Joan's parents. Dark whispers of religious backsliding on the part of the Court of Brussels were rife in the grim circle of friars and devotees that accom-

panied Isabel. It was said that Joan and her husband openly slighted the rigid observance of religious form considered essential in Spain, and that the freedom of thought and speech common in Flanders was more to the taste of Joan than the terror-stricken devotion of her Inquisition-ridden native land. Isabel had dedicated her strenuous life and vast ability to the unification of the faith in Spain. She had connived at cruelty unfathomable, and had exterminated whole races of her subjects with that sole object. Throughout her realms and those of her husband no heresy dared now raise its head, or even whisper doubt; and the thought that free-thinking, mocking Burgundian Philip, with his submissive wife, so alienated from her own people that she refused to send a message of loving greeting to her mother, should come and work their will upon the sacred soil of Castile, must have been torture to Isabel. To Ferdinand it must have been as bad; for it touched him, too, in his tenderest part. His life dream had been to realise the ambitions of Aragon. For that he had plotted, lied, and cheated; for that he had plundered his subjects, kept his realms at war, bartered his children and usurped his cousin's throne. But it would be all useless if Castile slipped through his fingers when his wife died, and his deadly enemy, his son-in-law, became king of Castile in right of his wife Joan.

The difficulty became more acute when Joan gave birth to her son at Ghent in February 1500, because, according to the law of succession, the child christened Charles, a name unheard of in Spain before, would inherit, not Castile and Leon alone, but Aragon as well, with Flanders, Burgundy, Artois, Luxembourg, the Aragonese kingdoms in Italy, and, worst of all,

Austria and the empire. Where would the interests of Aragon, nay, even of Spain, be amongst such world-wide dominions; and how could such a potentate devote himself either to aggrandising Aragon, or to carrying the Cross into the dark places of Moorish Africa? What added to the bitterness in Ferdinand's case was, that Philip was even now intriguing actively with the Kings of France, Portugal, and England against Aragon; and was, with vain pretexts, evading the pressing invitations of his wife's parents to bring her to Spain, to receive with him the oath of allegiance as heirs of the realms.

It was necessary somehow to conciliate Philip and Joan before they went too far; for Philip's plan, to marry the infant Prince Charles to a French princess, struck at the very root of Ferdinand's policy. Envoy after envoy was sent to Flanders to expedite the coming of Philip and Joan, if possible, with the infant Charles; but the Archduke had no intention of becoming the tool of his astute father-in-law, and was determined to be quite secure before he placed himself in his power. He was anxious enough to obtain recognition as heir of Castile jointly with his wife, but desired to leave Spain immediately afterwards, which did not suit Ferdinand, who wished to have time to influence him towards his policy, and alienate him from his Flemish and French favourites.[1] Joan herself flatly refused to come without her husband; of whom, with ample reason, she was violently jealous; and neither would allow the infant Charles to come without them. At length, after Joan had been delivered of her third child, a daughter named Isabel, the

[1] Zurita: Rodriguez Villa, 'Juana la Loca,' and 'Calendar of Spanish State Papers,' Supplement to Vol. i.

prayers and promises of Queen Isabel and her husband prevailed, and the Archduke and Archduchess consented to come to Spain. But it was under conditions that turned the heart of Ferdinand more than ever against his son-in-law. They would travel to Spain through France, and ratify in Paris the betrothal of their one-year old son Charles, heir of Spain, Flanders, and the empire, with Claude of France, child of Louis XII. Philip went out of his way during the sumptuous reception in Paris to show his submission to the King of France; and even did homage to him as Count of Flanders; but Joan, mindful for once, at least, that she belonged to the house of Aragon, and was heiress of Spain, refused all tokens implying her subservience.

On the 7th May 1502, Joan and her husband entered the imperial city of Toledo with all the ceremony that Castile could supply. At the door of the great hall in the Alcazar, Isabel stood to receive her heirs. Both knelt before her and tried to kiss her hand, but the Queen raised them, and embracing her daughter, carried her off to her private chamber. Soon afterwards the Archduchess and her husband took the oath as heirs of Castile in the vast Gothic Cathedral; and the splendid festivities to celebrate the event were hardly begun before another trouble came in the announcement of the death of Arthur, Prince of Wales, husband of Isabel's youngest daughter, Katharine. The event immediately changed the aspect of the game. The next heir of England was a boy of eleven, who might be married to a French princess, and thus cause one other blow to Ferdinand's carefully arranged schemes. This made it more necessary than ever that Joan and Philip should be brought into entire obedience to Spanish views. War broke out

between France and Spain at once, and strenuous efforts were made by Ferdinand to expel from Spain the councillors of Philip, who were known to be in the French interest.[1] The Archduchess and her husband were then taken to Aragon, to receive the homage of the Cortes there as heirs of Ferdinand, and then Philip, in spite of all remonstrance, hurried back again to his own country. Isabel gravely took her son-in-law to task when he announced his intention to return to Flanders by land through France whilst Spain was at war. It was, she said, his duty to recollect, moreover, that he was, in right of his wife, heir to one of the greatest thrones in the world, and should stay at least long enough in the country to know the people and their language and customs. To her entreaties the Archduchess, now far advanced in pregnancy, and unable to travel, added her prayers and tears. But all in vain; Philip, against the respectful protest even of the Cortes, would go, and insisted upon travelling through France, the enemy of Spain.[2] So, almost in flight, Philip of Burgundy crossed the frontiers of his father-in-law, leaving his wife Joan and their unborn child in Castile, in December 1502.

Never in their lives had Ferdinand and Isabel suffered such a rebuff as this. That the man, who on their death would succeed them, was a free-living German Fleming, who cared nothing for Spain, to promote whose glory they had lived and laboured so

[1] Especially the Archbishop of Besançon, whose influence over Philip was great. Philip would not let him go; but he died suddenly directly afterwards, doubtless of poison. Philip's hurry to get away from Spain was attributed to his own fears of poison.

[2] A copy of their urgent remonstrance from Toledo is in MS. in the Royal Academy of History, Madrid.

hard, was bitter enough for them. But that he should be so lost to all duty and respect towards them and to their country as to leave them thus, to rejoice with the enemy in arms against them, convinced them that under him and his wife Spain and the faith had nothing to expect but neglect and sacrifice for other interests. Isabel's frequent conversations with her daughter Joan, during the months she had been in Spain, had more than confirmed the worst fears she had formed from the reports sent to her from Flanders. Joan, though of course a Catholic, obstinately refused to conform to the rigid ritual of Castile; and, both in acts and words, showed a strange disregard of, and, indeed, captious resistance to, her mother's wishes. She was inconstant and fickle; sometimes determined, notwithstanding her condition, to go and rejoin her husband, sometimes docile and amiable.

It had become evident to Isabel and her husband not many weeks after Joan and Philip's arrival, that these were no fit successors to continue the policy that was to make Spain the mistress of the world and the arbiter of the faith; and to the Cortes of Toledo, which took the oath of allegiance to Philip and his wife, it was secretly intimated that the Queen wished that, 'if, when the Queen died, Juana was absent from the realms, or, after having come to them, should be obliged to leave them again, or that, although present, she might not choose, or *might not be able to reign and govern*,'[1] Ferdinand should rule Castile in her name. This was a serious departure both from strict legality and from usage, and has been considered by recent commentators to indicate that, even thus early, Isabel wished to exclude her daughter from the throne, either

[1] 'Calendar of Spanish State Papers,' Supplement to vols. i and ii.

for heresy or madness, or with that pretext. That Joan was hysterical, obstinate, and unstable, is evident from all contemporary testimony, and that she defied her mother in her own realm is clear from what followed; but it seems unnecessary to seek to draw from these facts the deduction that Isabel at this juncture meant to disinherit her daughter *in any case*. Philip's flagrant flouting of what Isabel and her husband considered the best interests of Spain, and his laxity in religion, as understood in Castile, furnished ample reason for the desire on the part of Isabel, when she felt her health failing, to ensure, so far as she could do it, that the policy inaugurated by her and her husband should be continued by him after her death, instead of allowing Spain to be handed over by an absentee prince to a Flemish viceroy. The suggestion that Joan *might not be able* to govern, even if she was in Spain, was not unnatural, considering that her conduct, as reported to Isabel from Flanders, had certainly been strangely inconsistent, whilst her behaviour since she had arrived in Spain had not mended matters.[1]

Joan gave birth in March 1503 at Alcalá de Henares to a son, who, in after years, became the Emperor Ferdinand; and immediately after the christening in Toledo Cathedral the Archduchess declared that she would stay in Spain no longer, but would join her husband in Flanders. Isabel humoured her as best she could, persuading her to accompany her from Alcalá to Segovia, on the pretext

[1] Sandoval, in his 'Historia de Carlos v.,' gives a glowing account of the festivities that followed, and especially of a ridiculously fulsome sermon preached by the Bishop of Malaga on the occasion, laying quite a malicious emphasis upon poor Joan's devotion to what was called in Spain 'Christianity,' or rather the strict Catholic ritual.

that it would be more easy to arrange there the sea voyage from Laredo. The Princess was held in semi-restraint under various excuses for a time, but at last she extracted from her mother a promise that she would let her go by sea (but not through France, with which they were still at war), when the weather should be fair, for it was still almost winter.

From Segovia the Queen took her daughter to Medina del Campo, as she said, to be nearer the sea; but there the worry of the situation threw Isabel into some sort of apoplectic fit, and for a time her life was despaired of. Ferdinand was with his successful army on the French frontier; and the physicians, in their reports to him of his wife's illness, attribute the attacks she suffered entirely to the life that Joan was leading her. 'The disposition of the Princess is such, that not only must it cause distress to those who love and value her so dearly, but even to a perfect stranger. She sleeps badly, eats little, and sometimes not at all, and she is very sad and thin. Sometimes she will not speak, and in this, and in some of her actions, which are as if she were distraught, her infirmity is much advanced. She will only take remedies either by entreaty and persuasion, or out of fear, for any attempt at force produces such a crisis that no one likes or dares to provoke it.'[1] This trouble, the doctor adds, together with the usual constant worries of government, is breaking the Queen down entirely, and something must be done. The Secretary, Conchillos, writing at the same time, gives the same testimony. 'The Queen,' he says, 'is better, but in great tribula-

[1] These interesting letters are in MS. in the Royal Academy of History, Madrid, A 11. Some of them are quoted by Rodriguez Villa in his 'Dona Juaña la Loca.'

tion and fatigue with this Princess, God pardon her.'[1]

Isabel soon had to travel to Segovia, after praying her daughter not to leave Medina until her father returned. But she took care to give secret instructions to the Bishop of Cordova, who had charge of Joan, 'to detain her, if she tried to get away, as gently and kindly as possible.' Nothing, however, short of force would suffice to prevent Joan from joining her husband, who, on his side from Flanders, constantly urged her coming, and protested against delay.[2] At last Joan became so clamorous that a message was sent to her from her mother, saying that the King and herself were coming to see her at Medina, and ordering her not to attempt to leave until they arrived. Joan seems to have taken fright at this, and, horses being denied her, she attempted to escape alone and on foot from the great castle of La Mota, where she was lodged. Finding when she arrived at the outer moat that the gates were shut against her by the Bishop of Cordova, she fell into a frenzy and refused to move from the barrier where she was stayed. All that day and night, in the bitter cold of late autumn, the princess remained immovable in the open, deaf to all remonstrance and entreaty, refusing even to allow a screen of cloth to be hung for her shelter. Isabel was gravely ill at Segovia, forty miles away, but she instantly sent Joan's uncle, Enriquez, to pacify the princess and persuade her at least to go to her rooms again. But neither he nor the powerful Jimenez, Cardinal Primate of Spain,

[1] Royal Academy of History, Madrid, A 9, and Rodriguez Villa.

[2] He even had a letter written, as if by his child Charles of three years old, to King Ferdinand praying that his mamma might be allowed to come home to them.

could move her, and at last Isabel, sick as she was, had to travel to Medina, and prevailed upon her daughter again to enter the castle, where she remained on the assurance of the Queen that she should go and rejoin her husband in Flanders when the King arrived.

In the meanwhile peace was made with France, and Isabel and her husband tried their hardest to persuade Philip to send the infant Charles to Spain to replace his mother. Promise after promise was given that Charles should go to his grandparents; but Philip had no intention of entrusting his heir to Ferdinand's tender mercies, and all the promises were broken. Isabel's death was seen to be approaching, and already a strong Castilian party, jealous of Aragon and of the old King, was looking towards Isabel's heiress in Flanders and drifting away from Ferdinand. The detention of Joan against her will at Medina was regarded sourly by Castilians generally, and at length the scandal had to be ended. In March 1504, the princess therefore was allowed to leave her place of detention at Medina, and after two months further delay in Laredo, took ship for Flanders, to see her mother no more.

No sooner was she safe in her husband's territory than the plot that had long been hatching against her father came to a head. In September 1504 Philip, his father Maximilian, Louis XII., and a little later the Pope, joined in a series of leagues, from which Ferdinand was pointedly excluded. It was intended as a notice to Ferdinand, that when his wife died he would no longer be King of Spain, but only King of Aragon, unable to hold what he had grasped; and, though the wily King fell ill and

was like to die at the news, he was not beaten yet, and in time to come was more than a match for all his enemies. But Isabel was sick unto death. A united orthodox Spain had been her life's ideal. With labour untiring she and her husband had attained it, and now she saw the imminent ruin of her work through the undutifulness of her daughter's foreign husband. It was no fault of Isabel's, for she had been single-minded in her aims; but Ferdinand had been brought to this pass by his own over-reaching cleverness. In yoking stronger powers than himself to his car he had enlisted forces that he could not control, and which were now pulling a different way from that in which he wanted to go. Those that he depended upon to be his prime instruments had been removed by death, whilst those who he had hoped to make subsidiary factors in his favour were now principals and against him.

The accumulating troubles at length, in the autumn of 1504, threw Isabel into a tertian fever, which was aggravated by the fact that Ferdinand, being also ill in bed, could not visit his wife. Isabel's anxiety for her husband was pitiable to witness; and though her physicians assured her that he was in no danger, his absence from her bedside increased the fever and threw her into delirium. Symptoms of dropsy, and probably diabetes, since constant insatiable thirst and swelling of the limbs are mentioned as symptoms, ensued, and for three months the Queen lay gradually growing worse and worse. Rogations for her recovery were offered up in every church in Castile, but by her own wish, after a time, this was discontinued, and the heroic Queen, strong to the last, faced death undismayed, confident that she had done her best, yet

humble and contrite. When the extreme unction was to be administered she exhibited a curious instance of her severe modesty, almost prudery, by refusing to allow even her foot to be uncovered to receive the sacred oil, which was applied to the silken stocking that covered the limb instead of to the flesh.

To the last she was determined that, if she could prevent it, Joan and her husband should not rule in Castile as absentee sovereigns whilst Ferdinand lived. Her will, which was signed in October, is a notable document, showing some of Isabel's strongest characteristics. She would be buried very simply, and without the usual royal mourning, in the city of her greatest glory, the peerless Granada; 'but if the King, my lord,' desires to be buried elsewhere, then her body was to be laid by the side of his. Her debts were to be paid, and many alms distributed and religious benefactions founded, and all her jewels were to be given to Ferdinand, 'that they may serve as witness of the love I have ever borne him, and remind him that I await him in a better world, and so that with this memory he may the more holily and justly live.' What does not seem so saintly a provision was, that all the royal grants she had given, except those to her favourite Beatriz de Bobadilla, were cancelled on her death. With a firm hand she signed this will later in October 1504, providing in it also that her daughter Joan should succeed her on the throne of Castile:[1] but before she died, almost indeed in the last act of her life, her fears for Spain

[1] When the will was signed Isabel called her husband to her bedside, and with tears made him swear that, neither by a second marriage nor otherwise, would he try to deprive Joan of the crown. She fell back then prostrate and was thought to be dead, but afterwards revived.

conquered her love for her daughter. In a codicil signed on the 23rd November, three days before her death, she left to Ferdinand the governorship of Castile in the name of her daughter Joan; and enjoined him solemnly to cause the Indians of America to be brought to the faith gently and kindly, and their oppression to be redressed.

With trembling hands and streaming eyes she handed the codicil to Jimenez, solemnly entrusting him with the fulfilment of all her wishes, a trust which he obeyed far better than did her husband, and then Isabel the Catholic had done with the world. Thenceforward she was serene; eyewitnesses say as beautiful as in youth. 'Do not weep,' she said to her attendants, 'for the loss of my body; rather pray for the gain of my soul.'

And so at the hour of noon, on the 26th November 1504, the greatest of Spanish queens gently breathed her last, a dignified, devout, great lady to the end. Days afterwards, when Ferdinand was busy plotting how he could oust his daughter from her heritage, the body of Isabel was carried across bleak Castile, with soaring crucifixes and swinging censers, by a great company of churchmen to far away Granada, there to lay for all time to come, under the shadow of the red palace that she had won for the cross. As the velvet hearse with the body of the Queen of Castile, dressed in death as a Franciscan nun, wound its way over the land she had made great, the wildest tempest in the memory of man roared her requiem. Earthquake, flood and hurricane, scoured the way by which the corpse was borne: skies of ink by night and day for all that three weeks' pilgrimage lowered over the affrighted folk that accompanied

the bier, convinced that heaven itself was muttering mourning for the mighty dead. But it is related that when at last Granada was reached, and the Christian mosque received the corpse of its conqueror, the glorious sun burst out at its brightest for the first time, and all the vega smiled under a stainless sky.

Isabel the Catholic was a great queen and a good woman, because her aims were high. She was not tender, or gentle, or what we should now call womanly. If she had been, she would not have made Castile one of the greatest powers in Europe in her reign of thirty years. She was not scrupulous, or she would not have been so easily persuaded to displace her niece the Beltraneja. She was not tender-hearted, or she would not have looked unmoved upon the massacre or expulsion, in circumstances of atrocious inhumanity, of Jews and Moors, to whom she broke her solemn oath upon a weak pretext. She was none of these pleasant things; nor was she the sweet, saintly housewife she is usually represented. If she had been, she would not have been Isabel the Catholic — one of the strongest personalities, and probably the greatest woman ruler the world ever saw: a woman whose virtue slander itself never dared to attack; whose saintly devotion to her faith blinded her eyes to human things, and whose anxiety to please the God of mercy made her merciless to those she thought His enemies.

BOOK II

JOAN THE MAD

BOOK II

On the same day (26th November 1504) that Isabel died, Ferdinand, with sorrow-stricken face, and tears coursing down his cheeks, sallied from the palace of Medina del Campo, and upon a platform hastily raised in the great square of the town, proclaimed his daughter Joan Queen of Castile, with the usual ceremony of hoisting pennons and the crying of heralds : 'Castile, Castile, for our sovereign lady Queen Joan.' Then the clause of the dead Queen's will was read, giving to Ferdinand power to act as King of Castile whenever Joan was absent from Spain, or was unable or unwilling to govern, and enjoining upon Joan and her husband obedience and submission to Ferdinand. Castile was in a ferment; for all men knew that the death of the Queen opened infinite possibilities of change. The Castilian nobles, so long humbled by Isabel, dared again to hope that better times for them might come in the contending interests around the throne; and there were not a few, especially Aragonese, that counselled Ferdinand to claim the throne of Castile for himself[1] by right of descent, instead of governing in his daughter's name.

But Ferdinand's way was always a tortuous one, and the letters from him the same night that carried to Flanders the news of his wife's death were addressed to 'Joan and Philip, by the grace of God Sovereigns

[1] Zurita, 'Anales de Aragon.'

of Castile, Leon, Granada, Princes of Aragon, etc., etc'; whilst every city in the realms was informed that henceforward the title of King of Castile would be borne no more by Ferdinand, but only that of Administrator for Joan.[1] The step was profoundly diplomatic, for all Europe and half Spain was distrustful of Ferdinand, and the open usurpation of Castile would have been forcibly resisted. And yet, as we shall see, he intended to rule Castile; and in the end had his way. Philip and Joan, in reply to their loving father, declined to commit themselves as to Ferdinand's proceedings, and announced their coming to take possession of their realm of Castile. They were equally cool to Ferdinand's envoy, Fonseca, Bishop of Cordova, whom Joan had no reason to love. In the meanwhile, Cortes was convoked at Toro (January 1505) in the name of Joan; and there Ferdinand played his first card, by claiming, under the clause in Isabel's will, the right to govern Castile until Joan should be present and demonstrate her fitness to rule.[2] The nobles of Castile, already jealous of Aragon, were determined to resist this, though the

[1] A full account of the progress of events from day to day at the time is given in Documents Ineditos, vol 18.

[2] Ferdinand, after the Cortes had taken the oath of allegiance, addressed to them a document (quoted in full by Zurita) saying that when Queen Isabel provided in her will for the case of Joan's incapacity to rule, she had not gone further into particulars out of consideration for her daughter; although the latter had, whilst she was in Spain, shown signs of mental disturbance. The time had now come, said Ferdinand, to inform the Cortes in strict secrecy of the real state of affairs. Since Joan's return to Flanders reports from Ferdinand's agents, and from Philip himself, which were exhibited to the Cortes, said that her malady had increased, and that her state was such that the case foreseen by Queen Isabel in her will had now arrived. The Cortes, after much deliberation and against the nobles, led by the Duke of Najera, thereupon decided to acknowledge Ferdinand as ruler owing to the incapacity of Joan.

Cortes agreed; and Juan Manuel, the most notable diplomatist in Castile, descended from the royal house, and Ferdinand's deadly enemy, was sent to Philip, over whom his influence was complete, as the envoy of the Castilian nobles; thenceforward from Flanders to animate and direct the diplomatic campaign against Ferdinand.

The situation thus became daily more strained. Ferdinand's confidential agents endeavoured to sow discord between Joan and her husband, not a difficult matter; and on one occasion the Queen, in a fit of jealousy, was persuaded by the Aragonese Secretary Conchillos to sign a letter approving of her father's acts. The messenger to whom it was entrusted betrayed it to Philip, and Conchillos was cast into a dungeon; all Spaniards were warned away from Court, and Joan completely isolated, even from her chaplain. Thinking that in the palace of Brussels Joan was too easy of access, Philip arranged that she should be secretly removed. Whilst the Burgomaster and Councillors were discussing at dead of night in the palace the details of the secret flitting, poor Joan herself learnt what was in the wind; and being denied an interview with the Spanish bishop who attended her, she peremptorily summoned the Prince of Chimay. He dared not enter her chamber alone; but accompanied by another courtier he obeyed the Queen's summons. They found her in a violent passion, and with difficulty escaped personal attack; with a result that, though the Queen was not immediately removed, she was thenceforward kept strictly guarded in her chambers, a prisoner.[1]

When news came of the decision of the Cortes of Toro that Joan was unfit to rule, Philip prevailed upon

[1] Zurita, 'Anales de Aragon.'

his wife to sign a remarkable letter[1] for publication in Castile. 'Since they want in Castile to make out that I am not in my right mind, it is only meet that I should come to my senses again, somewhat; though I ought not to wonder that they raise false testimony against me, since they did so against our Lord. But, since the thing has been done so maliciously, and at such a time, I bid you (M. de Vere) speak to my father the king on my behalf, for those who say this of me are acting not only against me but against him; and people say that he is glad of it, so as to have the government of Castile, though I do not believe it, as the King is so great and catholic a sovereign and I his dutiful daughter. I know well that the King my Lord (*i.e.* Philip) wrote thither complaining of me in some respect; but such a thing should not go beyond father and children! especially as, if I did fly into passions and failed to keep up my proper dignity, it is well known that the only cause of my doing so was jealousy. I am not alone in feeling this passion; for my mother, great and excellent person as she was, was also jealous; but she got over it in time, and so, please God, shall I. Tell everybody there (*i.e* in Castile) . . . . that, even if I was in the state that my enemies would wish me to be, I would not deprive the King, my husband, of the government of the realms, and of all the world if it were mine to give.' . . . .— Brussels, 3rd May 1505.'

We can see here, and in the several reports sent, that Joan had little or no control over herself. In the conflict, daily growing more bitter, between her husband and her father, she swayed from one side to another according to the influences brought to bear upon her.

[1] Discovered in the Alburquerque archives by Sr. Rodriguez Villa, and published by him in his 'Doña Juana La Loca.'

Her gusts of jealous rage and frenzied violence gave to both sides the excuse of calling her mad when it suited them to do so, or to declare that such temporary fits were compatible with general sanity when they wanted her sane. Joan's affection for her husband was fierce, and monopolous, and his iufluence over her was great, especially when he appealed to her pride and her rights as Queen of Castile, but her sense of filial duty was also high ; and whenever she understood that a measure was intended to be against her father, she indignantly refused to countenance it. Ferdinand knew that the King of France had been enlisted by Philip and Maximilian against him ; and that an army was being mustered in Flanders ; whilst a project was on foot for Philip to come to Castile without Joan. This he was determined to prevent ; and warned his son-in-law that he would not be allowed to act as King without his wife. To this warning Philip retorted by ordering his father-in-law to leave Castile, and return to his own realm of Aragon.

In this contest poor hysterical Joan was but a cypher, with her gusts of jealous passion and her lack of fixed resolution. When she had arrived in Flanders after her detention in Spain, she had discovered that her husband, whose coolness she noted from the first, was carrying on a liaison with a lady of the court. We are told that she sought out the lady in a raving fury and seriously injured her ; as well as causing all her beautiful hair, of which she was proud, to be cut off close to the scalp. This led to a violent scene between Philip and Joan, in which not only hard words but hard blows were exchanged ; and Joan took to her bed, seriously ill both in body and mind. These scenes continued at intervals, either with or without good reason, but with

the natural result that Philip in his relations with his father-in-law acted almost independently of his wife; who, as Ferdinand afterwards said, was really a good dutiful daughter, proud of Spain and her people.

Ferdinand had at his side at this juncture the great Cardinal Jimenez. The stern Franciscan had been no friend of the King, who had opposed his appointment as primate; but he was a patriotic Spaniard, and could not fail to see that if Flemish Philip was paramount in Spain, the work of Isabel for the faith would be in peril. Ferdinand, he knew, was an able and experienced ruler, who would not greatly change the existing system; and he threw all his powerful influence on the side of an arrangement that might leave Ferdinand real power in Castile, without entirely alienating Philip. Above all, Jimenez was determined to prevent the ambitious Castilian nobles from again dominating the government; which they hoped to do if an inexperienced foreigner like Philip took the reins. It was, indeed, quite as much a struggle between Ferdinand and Jimenez and the Castilian nobles, as between Ferdinand and his son-in-law. But Jimenez's patriotic efforts met with little success, so far as Philip was concerned; and, in the meantime, Ferdinand, whilst ostensibly solacing himself in hunting, was quietly planning a characteristic stroke at his enemy.

He was fifty-five years of age and still robust, and he bethought himself that he might yet win the game by a second marriage. It was almost sacrilege to contemplate such a thing in the circumstances; but to Ferdinand of Aragon any crooked way was straight that led him to his goal. So he sent his natural son, Hugo de Cardona, to propose secretly to the King of Portugal that the forgotten Beltraneja should leave

her convent and become Queen of Aragon, joining her claims to Castile to those of Ferdinand and ousting Joan and Philip.[1] It was a wicked cynical idea, for it made Isabel a usurper; but neither the King of Portugal nor his cousin, the Beltraneja, would have anything to say to it; so Ferdinand turned towards a solution, which, if not quite so iniquitous morally, was even more inimical to the interest of Spain as a nation. This was nothing less than to outbid Philip for the friendship of the King of France, upon which he mainly depended to frustrate his father-in-law's plans. Ferdinand had broken all his former covenants with Louis XII. The French had been turned out of Naples, and the great Gonzalo de Cordova was there as Ferdinand's viceroy. He was a Castilian; and already Ferdinand's spies had reported that the Castilian nobles, in union with Philip and France, were tampering with Cordova's loyalty and endeavouring to establish the claim of Castile, instead of Aragon, to Naples. Ferdinand, with what sincerity may be supposed, rapidly patched up an alliance with Louis XII., by which the widowed King of Aragon was to marry the niece of the King of France, Germaine de Foix, a spoiled and petted young beauty of twenty-one. Any heirs of the marriage were to inherit Aragon, Sicily, and Naples; but in the case of no children being left, Naples was to be divided between France and Aragon;

[1] It has already been mentioned on page 26 that, according to Galindez, a will of Henry IV. leaving the crown of Castile to the Beltraneja had come into Ferdinand's possession on Isabel's death. The authority for the statement that Ferdinand offered marriage to the Beltraneja at this juncture is principally Zurita, 'Anales de Aragon,' and it was adopted by Mariana and later historians. Mr. Prescott scornfully rejects the whole story, without, as it seems to me, any reason whatever for doing so, except that it tells against Ferdinand's character. It is surely too late in the day to hope to save *that*.

great concessions were made at once to the French in Naples, and a million gold crowns were to be paid by Ferdinand to France as indemnity for the late war.

This, it will be seen, quite isolated Philip, threatened again to separate Aragon and Castile, and at one blow to undo the work both of Isabel and her husband. But as Ferdinand never kept more of a treaty than suited him at the moment, it may be fairly assumed that he signed this only to bridge his present difficulty and with such mental reservation as was usual with him. When the news reached Brussels Maximilian himself was there with his son, and they at once tried their best to deal a counterstroke. When certain papers were presented to Joan for signature denouncing to the Castilian people Ferdinand's treaty and second marriage, she stood firm in her refusal to sign. Philip exerted the utmost pressure upon his wife; but at last, worn out by his and Maximilian's importunity, the unhappy lady burst into ungovernable rage, flinging the papers from her and crying that she would never do anything against her father. The isolation and close guard over the Queen was indeed working its natural effect upon her highly wrought nervous system; and Ferdinand's ambassadors, who had come to announce his marriage with his French bride, and to offer terms of friendship to his son-in-law, were scandalised at the treatment of their Queen. When, after much difficulty, they were allowed to see her at the palace of Brussels it was only on condition that they should have no conversation with her.

Shortly afterwards, in September 1505, Joan was delivered of a daughter (Maria, afterwards Queen of Hungary and Governess of the Netherlands), and Philip then decided that the time had come to carry

her to Castile and claim the throne. First issuing a manifesto to the Castilian nobles and towns, ordering them not to obey Ferdinand in anything, he made overtures to the King of France to allow him to pass overland to Spain. This was flatly refused. The French princess, Germaine, was now Ferdinand's wife, and all the help that Louis XII. could give would be against Philip and Joan. It was therefore decided to make the voyage by sea, and a large fleet of sixty ships, with a retinue of three thousand persons, was mustered in one of the ports of Zeeland. In the meanwhile ceaseless intrigue went on both in Spain and abroad. France having abandoned him, Philip turned to England. Juan Manuel's sister, Elvira, was the principal lady in waiting upon Katharine, Princess of Wales, and through her and Katharine secret negotiations were opened for a marriage between Henry VII. and Philip's sister, the Archduchess Margaret, the widow of Juan, Prince of Asturias and of the Duke of Savoy, with an alliance between England and Philip—though Katharine probably did not understand at first how purely this was a move against her father. So, although Henry VII. still professed to be on Ferdinand's side in the quarrel, he was quite ready for a secret alliance with Philip and Joan against him and the King of France.

The King and Queen of Castile left Brussels early in November to join the waiting fleet, but from the slowness of their movements and the ostentatious publicity given to them, it is clear that their first object was to prepare Castile in their favour. Philip, for a time, scouted all idea of arrangement with Ferdinand. He knew that the Castilian nobles were on his side, and that his wife's legal right was unimpeachable. The wily old King of Aragon saw that his best policy was to

temporise, and to do that he must seem strong. His first move was to declare to the Castilians that Joan was sane, but was kept a prisoner by her husband, and he proposed to send a fleet to rescue her and bring her and her son Charles to Castile. Philip's Flemish subjects were discontented at his proposed long absence, and also threatened trouble. Then Ferdinand hinted that he would mobilise all his force to resist Philip's landing.

This series of manœuvres delayed the departure of Philip and his wife month after month; until Ferdinand, by consummate diplomacy, managed to patch up an agreement with Philip's ambassadors at Salamanca at the end of November; which, though on the face of it fair enough, was really an iniquitous plot for the exclusion of Joan in any circumstances. Philip and Joan were to be acknowledged by Castile as sovereigns, and their son Charles as heir; but, at the same time, Ferdinand was to be accepted as perpetual governor in his daughter's absence: and in the case of Queen Joan being unwilling or unable to undertake the government, the two Kings, Ferdinand and Philip, were to issue all decrees and grants in their joint names. The revenues of Castile and of the Grand Masterships were to be equally divided between Philip and Ferdinand.

When once this wicked but insincere agreement was ratified there was no further need for delay, and Philip's fleet sailed for Spain on the 8th January 1506 to engage in the famous battle of wits with his father-in-law, which only one could win. All went well until the Cornish coast was passed, and then a dead calm fell, followed by a furious south-westerly gale which scattered the ships and left that in which Philip and Joan were without any escort. To add to the

trouble a fire broke out upon this vessel, and a fallen spar gave the ship such a list as to leave her almost waterlogged. Despair seized the crew, and all gave themselves up for lost. Philip played anything but an heroic part. His attendants dressed him in an inflated leather garment, upon the back of which was painted in staring great letters, 'The King, Don Philip,' and thus arrayed, he knelt before a blessed image in prayer, alternating with groans, expecting every moment would be his last. Joan does not appear to have lost her head. She is represented by one contemporary authority [1] as being seated on the ground between her husband's knees, saying that if they went down she would cling so closely to him that they should never be separated in death, as they had not been in life. The Spanish witnesses are loud in her praise in this danger. 'The Queen,' they say, 'showed no signs of fear, and asked them to bring her a box with something to eat. As some of the gentlemen were collecting votive gifts to the Virgin of Guadalupe, they passed the bag to the Queen, who, taking out her purse containing about a hundred doubloons, hunted amongst them until she found the only half-doubloon there, showing thus how cool she was in the danger. A king never was drowned yet, so she was not afraid, she said.' [2]

At length, mainly by the courage and address of one sailor, the ship was righted, the fire extinguished, and the vessel brought into the port of Weymouth on the 17th January 1506. Henry VII. of England

[1] 'Collection de Voyages des Souverains des Pays Bas,' vol. i.

[2] From a most entertaining Spanish account in manuscript in the Royal Academy of History, Madrid, in which the courtiers are mercilessly chaffed.

had been courted and conciliated by Philip for some time past, but it was a dangerous temptation to put in the wily Tudor's way to enable him to make his own terms for an alliance. Above all, he wanted to get into his power the rebel Earl of Suffolk, who was in refuge in Flanders, and this seemed his opportunity. Philip had had enough of the sea for a while. We are assured by one who was there that he was 'fatigate and unquyeted in mynde and bodie,' and he yearned to tread firm land again. His councillors urged him to take no risk, but Philip and Joan landed at Melcombe Regis to await a fair wind for sailing again. From far and near the west country gentry flocked down with their armed bands, ready for war or peace, but when they found that the royal visitors were friendly their hospitality knew no bounds. Sir John Trenchard would take no denial. The King and Queen must rest in his manor-house hard by until the weather mended; and, in the meanwhile, swift horses carried the news to King Henry in London.

As may be supposed, when he heard the news, 'he was replenyshed with exceeding gladnes . . . for that he trusted it should turn out to his profit and commodity,' which it certainly did. But Philip grew more and more uneasy at the pressing nature of the Dorsetshire welcome. The armed bands grew greater, and though the weather improved, Trenchard would not listen to his guests going on board until the King of England had a chance of sending greeting to his good brother and ally. At length Philip and Joan realised that they were in a trap, and had to make the best of it, which they did with a good grace, for they were welcomed by Henry with effusive professions

of pleasure. Philip was conveyed with a vast cavalcade of gentlemen across England to Windsor, where he was met by Henry and his son, the betrothed of Katharine, Joan's sister. Then the King of Castile was led to London and to Richmond with every demonstration of honour. But, withal, it was quite clear that Henry would not let his visitors go until they had subscribed to his terms, whatever they might be. And so the pact was solemnly sworn upon a fragment of the true cross in Saint George's Chapel, Windsor, by Philip and Henry, by which Suffolk was to be surrendered to his doom, Philip's sister Margaret, with her fat dowry, was to be married to the widowed old Henry, and England was bound to the King of Castile against Ferdinand of Aragon.

Joan was deliberately kept in the background during her stay in England. She had followed her husband slowly from Melcombe, and arrived at Windsor ten days later, the day after Philip, with great ceremony, had been invested with the Order of the Garter and had signed the treaty. On her arrival at Windsor on the 10th February she saw her sister Katharine, though not alone, and Katharine left the next day to go to Richmond. Three days later, on the 14th February, Joan set out from Windsor again towards Falmouth, whilst Philip joined Henry at Richmond; and soon after the King of Castile was allowed to travel into the west and once more take ship for his wife's kingdom. The cynical exclusion of Joan from all participation in the treaty with England,[1] and the

[1] 'Spanish State Papers Calendar,' vol. i. Peter Martyr (Epist. 300) says that Katharine did her best to solace, comfort and entertain her sister Joan, but that the latter would take pleasure in nothing, and only loved solitude and darkness. In order to preserve appearances, the treaty arranged and signed before Joan's arrival at Windsor was

fact that she was only allowed to see her sister once, and in the presence of witnesses in the interests of Philip, seems to prove that she was purposely kept in the dark as to the real meaning of the treaty, which was directed almost as much against herself as against her father, because, with England on his side, Philip could always paralyse France from interfering with him in Spain; and it is clear that, whether Joan was really incapacitated at the time or not, both Ferdinand and Philip had already determined to make out that she was.

Like a pair of wary wrestlers the two opponents still played at arms' length. Ferdinand, after celebrating his second marriage—as he had celebrated his first, nearly forty years before—at Valladolid, awaited at Burgos, so as to be near on arrival of his daughter and her husband at one of the Biscay ports, as was expected. But nothing was further from Philip's thoughts than to land at any place near where Ferdinand was waiting. His idea was to go to Andalucia, so as to be able to march through Spain before meeting the old King, and to gather friends and partisans on the way. Contrary winds, however, drove the fleet into Corunna, on the extreme north-west of the Peninsula, on the 26th April; and Ferdinand, when he got the news, for a moment lost his smooth self-control, and was for flying at his undutiful son-in-law sword in hand. But the outbreak was not of long duration, for the circumstances were serious, and needed all the great astuteness of which Ferdinand was capable. He was determined to rule

ostensibly entered into by Philip as ruler of Flanders, not as King of Castile; but its whole object obviously was to strengthen Philip in Spain.

Castile whilst he lived for the benefit of his great Aragonese aims.

He had, indeed, some cause for complaint against fortune; for, with the exception of the kingdom of Naples, he had not yet gathered the harvest that he had reckoned upon as the result of the union of the realms. His son-in-law, now that, by the death of other heirs, Joan had become Queen of Castile, was an enemy instead of an ally, and his defection had rendered necessary the pact between Ferdinand and France, which had stultified much of the advantage previously gained by the Castilian connection. At any cost Castile must be held, or all would be lost. If Joan herself took charge of the government, as was her right, then goodbye to the hope of Ferdinand employing for his own purposes the resources of Castile; for around her would be jealous nobles hating Aragon; whereas, with Philip as King, it was certain that his imprudence, his ignorance of Spain, and the Castilian distrust of foreigners, would soon provoke a crisis that might give Ferdinand his chance. Both opponents, therefore, were equally determined to keep Joan away from active sovereignty, whatever her mental state; and as Philip and his wife rode through Corunna, smiling and debonair, gaining friends everywhere, but surrounded with armed foreigners, German guards, archers, and the like, strange to Spaniards, as if in an enemy's country, the plot thickened between the two antagonists.

Everywhere Philip took the lead, and Joan was treated as a consort.[1] In the verses of welcome it

[1] None of Ferdinand's envoys were allowed to see Joan at Corunna, but when the great Castilian nobles, Count Benavente and Marquis de Villena, came to pay homage, Joan was seated by the side of her

was Don Philip's name that came first; and Joan showed her discontent at the position in which she was placed by refusing to confirm the privileges of the cities through which they passed until she had seen her father, though Philip promised readily to do so. No sooner did Philip find himself supported by the northern nobles, than he announced that he would not be bound by the treaty of Salamanca, and generally gave Ferdinand to understand that he, Philip, alone, intended to be master. Ferdinand travelled forward to meet his son-in-law, making desperate attempts at conciliation and to win Juan Manuel to his side, but without success: whilst Philip tarried on the way and exhausted every means of delay in order to gain strength before the final struggle. To Philip's insulting messages Ferdinand returned diplomatic answers; in the face of Philip's scornful rejection of advances, Ferdinand was amiable, conciliatory, almost humble; he who, with the great Isabel, had been master of Spain for well nigh forty years. But he must have chuckled under his bated breath and whispering humbleness, for he knew that he was going to win, and he knew how he was going to do it.

Slowly Ferdinand travelled towards the north-west, sending daily embassies to Philip soliciting a friendly interview, and at every stage, as he came nearer, his son-in-law grew in arrogance. When Ferdinand left Astorga in the middle of May, Juan Manuel sent a message to him that if he wished to see the King of Castile, he must understand three things: first, that no business

husband, and the reception hall was thrown open to the public. This was necessary in consequence of the jealousy of Castilians against foreigners, and their insistence upon Joan's sovereignty; but it was the only occasion on which Philip openly associated her with his government.

would be discussed; second, that Philip must have stronger forces than he; and third, that he must not expect that he would be allowed to obtain any advantage by, or through, his daughter, Queen Joan, as they knew where that would lead them to. Therefore, continued Manuel, King Ferdinand had better not come to Santiago at all. In the meanwhile the inevitable discord was brewing in the Court of Joan and Philip at Corunna. The proud Castilian nobles, greedy and touchy, who had flocked to Philip's side, found that Flemings and Germans always stood between them and the throne, and intercepted the favours for which they hungered. The Teutons, who thought they were coming to Spain to lord over all, found a jealous nobility and a nation convinced of its own heaven-sent superiority, ready to resist to the death any encroachment of foreigners, whom they regarded with hate and scorn.

The Castilians deplored most the isolation of Joan, and endeavoured by a hundred plans to persuade her to second her husband's action towards her father. Philip ceased now even to consult her, since she had refused to oppose Ferdinand; and in the pageantry of the entrance into Santiago and the triumphal march through Galicia, with a conquering army rather than a royal escort, Joan, in deepest black garments and sombre face, passed like a shadow of death. As the Kings gradually approached each other, Ferdinand, in soft words, begged Philip to let him know what alterations he desired to make in the agreement of Salamanca. After much fencing, Philip replied that if his father-in-law would send Cardinal Jimenez with full powers, he would try to arrange terms. The great point, he wrote, was that of Queen Joan; and the

King of Aragon knew full well that upon this point the issue between him and Philip would be joined. Ferdinand had little love or trust in the great Castilian Cardinal, Jimenez, though the latter was faithful to him, not for his own sake, but for the good of Spain; but the Cardinal went to Philip with full powers, and bearing a private letter, saying that, as Joan was incapacitated from undertaking the government, Ferdinand besought Philip to join and make common cause with him, in order to prevent her, either of her own accord or by persuasion of the nobles, from seizing the reins. This was the line upon which Philip was pleased to negotiate, and Cardinal Jimenez found a ready listener. Ferdinand, however, was ready with the other alternative solution if this failed. If Philip would not join with him to exclude Joan, he would join Joan to exclude Philip, and all preparations were quietly made to muster his adherents at Toro, make a dash for Benavente, the place where Philip was to stay, rescue Joan, and govern, with her or in her name, to the exclusion of foreigners.[1] But it was unnecessary. Jimenez's persuasion and Ferdinand's supple importunity conquered; and, though with infinite distrust and jealousy on all sides, the Kings still slowly approached each other, stage by stage, whilst the negotiations went on.

The Teutons and Castilians were at open loggerheads now; Queen Joan, reported Jimenez, was more closely guarded and concealed than ever, and Philip less popular in consequence. But, at length, the two rival Kings, on the 20th June 1506, found themselves in neighbouring villages; and on that day at a farm-

[1] See the draft summons to nobles and gentry, kept ready for the eventuality, reproduced by Rodriguez Villa, 'Doña Juana la Loca.'

house half-way between Puebla and Asturianos they met. Ferdinand, in peaceful guise, was attended only by the Duke of Alba and the gentlemen of his household, not more than two hundred in all, mostly mounted on mules and unarmed; whilst Philip came in warlike array with two thousand pikemen and hundreds of German archers in strange garments and outlandish headgear, whilst the flanks of his great company of nobles were protected by a host of Flemish troops. When Philip approached his father-in-law, with steel mail beneath his fine silken doublet, and surrounded by armed protectors, it was seen that his face was sour and frowning, whilst Ferdinand, almost alone and quite unarmed, came smiling and bowing low at every step. When the Castilian nobles came forward one by one shamefacedly, to kiss the hand of the old monarch they had betrayed, Ferdinand's satiric humour had full play, and many a sly thrust pierced their breasts, for all their hidden armour. After a few empty polite words between the Kings the conference was at an end, and each returned the way he came; Ferdinand more than ever chagrined that he had not been allowed even to see his daughter.

For the next few days the Kings travelled along parallel roads towards Benavente; Philip continuing to treat his father-in-law as an intruder in the most insulting fashion. At length their roads converged at a small village called Villafafila, at the time when the long discussed agreement had been settled by their respective ministers; and here, in the village church, the two rivals finally met to sign their treaty of peace on the 27th June 1506. It was a hellish compact, and it sealed the fate of unhappy Joan whatever might happen. Ferdinand came, as he said, with love in his

heart and peace in his hands, only anxious for the happiness of his 'beloved children,' and of the realm that was theirs: and, after warmly embracing Philip, he led him towards the little village church to sign and swear to the treaty. With them, amongst others, were Don Juan Manuel and Cardinal Jimenez, and when the treaty was signed and the church cleared, the great churchman took the arm of Manuel, and whispered, 'Don Juan, it is not fitting that we should listen to the talk of our masters. Do you go out first, and I will serve as porter.' And there alone, in the humble house of prayer, the two Kings made the secret compact which explains the treaty they had just publicly executed. In appearance Ferdinand gave up everything. He was, it is true, to have half the revenues from the American discoveries, and to retain much plunder from the royal Orders and other grants of money, but he surrendered completely all share and part in the government of Castile, and allied himself to Philip for offence and defence against the world.

The secret deed, the outcome of that sinister private talk between two cruel scoundrels in the village church, allows us to guess, in conjunction with what followed, the reason for Ferdinand's meek renunciation of the government. 'As the Queen Joan on no account wishes to have anything to do with any affair of government or other things; and, even if she did wish it, it would cause the total loss and destruction of these realms, having regard to her infirmities and passions, which are not described here for decency's sake'; and then the document provides that, 'if Joan of her own accord, or at the instance of others, should attempt to interfere in the government or disturb the arrangement made between the two Kings, they will join

forces to prevent it.' 'And so we swear to God our Lord, to the Holy Cross, and the four saintly evangelists, with our bodily hands placed upon His altar.' And the two smiling villains came out hand in hand, both contented; each of them sure that the best of the evil bargain lay with him, and Ferdinand made preparations for departure to his own Aragon, and so to his realm of Naples and Sicily, delighted that his 'beloved children' should peacefully reign over the land of Castile.

It was more than two years and a half since Ferdinand had seen his daughter Joan. During that time both he and Philip had alternately declared she was quite sane and otherwise, as suited their plans. Now both were agreed, not only that she did not *wish* to govern her country: but that if ever she *did* wish, or Castilians wished for her to do so, then her 'passions and infirmities,' so vaguely referred to, would make her rule disastrous. It ensured Philip being King of Castile *so long as he lived*, and Ferdinand being master if he survived, and until the majority of his grandson Charles. There is no reason to deny that Joan was wayward, morbid, and eccentric; subject to fits of jealous rage at certain periods or crises, and that subsequently she developed intermittent lunacy. But at this time, according to all accounts, she was not mad in a sense that justified her permanent exclusion from the throne that belonged to her. Philip, heartless, ambitious, and vain, wished to rule Castile alone, according to Burgundian methods, which were alien to Spain and to the Queen. Ferdinand knew that, in any case, such an attempt could not succeed for long; and by permanently excluding Joan he secured for himself the reversion practically for the rest of his life.

And so Joan was pushed aside and wronged by those whose sacred duty it was to protect and cherish her, and as Joan the Mad she goes down to all posterity.

But old Ferdinand had not yet shot his last bolt, for symmetry and completeness in his villainy was always his strong point. On the very day that the secret compact was signed, he came again to that humble altar of Villafafila, accompanied this time only by those faithful Aragonese friends who would have died for him, Juan Cabrero, who had befriended Colon, and his secretary, Almazan. Before these he swore and signed a declaration that Philip had come in great force whilst he had none, and had by intimidation and fear compelled him to sign a deed so greatly to the injury of his own daughter. He swore now that he had only done so to escape his peril, and never meant that Joan should be deprived of her liberty of action: on the contrary, he intended when he could to liberate her and restore to her the administration of the realm that belonged to her: and he solemnly denounced and repudiated the former oath he had just taken on the same altar. And then, quite happy in his mind, Ferdinand the Catholic went on his way, having left heavily bribed all the men who surrounded doomed Philip, including even the all-powerful favourite Juan Manuel.

Philip lost no time. Before Ferdinand had got beyond Tordesillas, a courtier reached him from his son-in-law giving him news of Joan's anger and passion when she learnt that she was pushed aside and was not to see her father. What would Ferdinand recommend? asked Philip. But the old King was not to be caught; he would not be cajoled into giving his consent to Joan being shut up, but he sent a long

sanctimonious rigmarole enjoining harmony, but meaning nothing. Philip then appealed to the nobles one by one, asking them to sign a declaration assenting to Joan's confinement. The Admiral of Castile, Ferdinand's cousin, led a strong opposition to this, and demanded a personal interview with the Queen to which Philip consented, and the Admiral and Count Benavente went to the fortress of Murcientes, where Joan and her husband were staying. At the door of the chamber stood Garcilaso de la Vega, a noble in Philip's interest, and Cardinal Jimenez was just inside; whilst in a window embrasure in the darkened room sat the Queen alone, garbed in black with a hood which nearly obscured her face. She rose as Admiral Enriquez approached, and with a low curtsey, asked him if he came from her father. 'Yes,' he replied, 'I left him yesterday at Tudela on his way to Aragon.' 'I should so much have liked to see him,' sighed poor Joan; 'God guard him always.' For many hours that day and the next the noble spoke to the Queen, saying how important it was to the country that she should agree well with her husband, and take part in the government that belonged to her. He reported afterwards that in all these conferences she never gave a random answer.

The Admiral was too important a person to be slighted, and Philip was forced to listen to some plain warnings from him. He must not venture to go to Valladolid without the Queen, or ill would come of it: the people were jealous already, and if Joan was shut up their fears would be confirmed. So Joan was borne by her husband's side to Valladolid in state, though her face was set in stony sorrow beneath the black cowl that shrouded it. Near there

one other interview took place between the two kings with much feigned affection, but no result as regards Joan. On the 10th July 1506, Joan and her husband rode through the city of Valladolid with all the pomp of Burgundy and Spain. Two banners were to be carried before the royal pair, but Joan knew she alone was Queen of Castile, and insisted that one should be destroyed before she would start. She was mounted upon a white jennet, housed in black velvet to match her own sable robes, and a black hood almost covered her face.[1] Shows, feasts and addresses were arranged for their reception, but they rode straight through the crowded, flower-decked streets without staying to witness them; and this joyous entry, we are told by an eyewitness, meant to be so gay, was blighted by an all-pervading gloom, as of some great calamity to come.

On the following day the Cortes took the oath of allegiance to Joan as Queen, and to Philip only as consort, and she personally insisted upon seeing the powers of the deputies. The ceremonies over, Philip came to business. Great efforts were made to persuade the Cortes to consent to Joan's confinement and Philip's personal rule; and Jimenez did his best to get the custody of her.[2] But the stout Admiral Enriquez

[1] Her grand-daughter, another Joan, sister of Philip II. and Princess of Portugal, had also after her widowhood this curious fancy to keep her face hidden.

[2] The part played by Jimenez at this period has always been a puzzling problem. He was apparently in the full confidence of Philip, but it is impossible to believe that he was not really acting in concert with Ferdinand at the time. He probably knew that one way or the other Philip was bound to disappear very soon, and his presence at the crisis would enable him, as it actually did, to keep firm hold upon the government until Ferdinand returned. His anxiety to get the custody of Joan seems to point to this also, as the person who held the Queen was the master of the situation.

stood in the way, and insisted that this iniquity should not be, so that Philip was obliged to put up with the position of administrator for his wife, since he could not be King in her stead. Flemings, Germans and Castilians, in the meanwhile, vied with each other in rapacity. Philip was free enough with the money of others, but even he had to go out hunting by stealth to escape importunity when he had given away all he had to give and more. But of all the greedy crew there was none so rapacious as Juan Manuel, little of body but great of mind, who, like the Marquis of Villena forty years before, grabbed with both hands insatiate. Fortresses, towns, pensions, assignments of national revenue, nothing came amiss to Manuel, and at last his covetous eyes were cast upon the fortress palace of Segovia, still in the keeping of that stout Andrés Cabrera and his wife, Beatriz de Bobadilla, Marchioness of Moya, the lifelong friend of the great Isabel. Philip gave an order that the Alcazar of Segovia was to be surrendered to Manuel. Surrender the Alcazar! after fifty years of keeping! No, forsooth, said big-hearted Dona Beatriz; only to Queen Joan will we give the fortress that her great mother entrusted to our keeping.

And so it happened that Philip, with Joan still in black by his side, rode out of Valladolid in August towards Segovia, to demand the fortress from its keeper. When the cavalcade reached Cogeces, half way to Segovia, Joan would go no further. They were taking her to Segovia, she cried, to imprison her in the Alcazar, and she threw herself from her horse writhing upon the ground, and refused to stir another step on the way. The prayers and threats of Philip and his councillors, whom she hated, were

worse than useless, and all that night she rode hither and thither across country refusing to enter the town. When the morning came Philip learnt that Cabrera had surrendered the Alcazar of Segovia to Manuel; and as there was no reason now for going thither, they rode back to Burgos. As they travelled through Castile, brows grew darker and hearts more bitter at this fine foreign gallant with his fair face and his gay garments, who kept the Queen of Castile in durance in her own realms, and packed his friends and foreign pikemen in all the strong castles of the land. When Burgos was reached on the 7th September, Philip deepened the discontent by ordering the immediate departure of the wife of the Constable of Castile, an Enriquez by birth, and consequently a cousin of Ferdinand, in order that Joan should have no relative near her, although they lodged in the Constable's palace. The Admiral of Castile and the Duke of Alba were also attacked by Philip, who demanded their fortresses as pledges of loyalty; and soon all Castile was in a ferment, clamouring for the return of the old King Ferdinand, and the liberation of their Queen Joan.

The King, not content with conferring upon his favourite Manuel the Alcazar of Segovia, now entrusted to his keeping the castle of Burgos, where it was determined to celebrate the surrender by entertaining Philip at a banquet. After the feast the King was taken ill of a malignant fever, it was said, caused by indulgence or over-exercise, and Philip lay ill for days in raging delirium. Joan, dry-eyed and cool, never left his side, saying little, but attending assiduously to the invalid. At one o'clock on the 25th September 1506 Philip I., King of Castile, breathed his last, in

his twenty-eighth year: but yet Joan, without a tear or a tremor, still stayed by his side, deaf to all remonstrance and condolence, to all appearance unmoved. She calmly gave orders that the corpse of her husband should be carried in state to the great hall of the Constable's palace upon a splendid catafalque of cloth of gold, the body clad in ermine-lined robes of rich brocade, the head covered by a jewelled cap, and a magnificent diamond cross upon the breast. A throne had been erected at the end of the hall, and upon this the corpse was arranged, seated as if in life. During the whole of the night the vigils for the dead were intoned by friars before the throne, and when the sunlight crept through the windows the body, stripped of its incongruous finery, was opened and embalmed and placed in a lead coffin, from which, for the rest of her life, Joan never willingly parted.[1]

Joan, in stony immobility, dazed and silent, gave no indication that she understood the tremendous importance of her husband's death; but courtiers and nobles, Castilians and Teutons alike, did not share her insensibility. Dismay fell upon the rapacious crew, fierce denunciations of poison,[2] scrambling for such plunder as could be grasped,[3] and dread apprehensions

[1] Estanques' 'Cronica' in Documentos Ineditos, vol. viii.

[2] Although, as was usual, Philip's Italian physician vehemently denied that there were any indications of poison on the remains, there can be but little doubt that Philip was murdered by agents of Ferdinand. The statement to that effect was freely and publicly made at the time, but the authorities were always afraid to prosecute those who made them. See 'Calendar of Spanish State Papers,' Supplement to Vol. i., p. xxxvii. There were many persons who attributed Philip's death, not to Ferdinand, but to the Inquisition, which Philip had offended by softening its rigour, and suspending the chief Inquisitors, Deza and Lucero; but this is very improbable.

[3] 'Collection de Voyages des Souverains des Pays Bas,' vol. i. It is

as to what would happen to them all when the King of Aragon should return. Joan had to be forcibly removed from the corpse; and for days remained shut up in a darkened room without speaking, eating, or undressing. When, at length, she learnt that the coffin had been carried to the Cartuja de Miraflores, near Burgos, she insisted upon going thither, and ordered an immense number of new mourning garments fashioned like nun's weeds. Arriving at the church, she heard mass, and then caused the coffin to be raised from the vault and broken open, the cere-cloths removed from the head and feet, which she kissed and fondled until she was persuaded to return to Burgos, on the promise that the coffin should be kept open for her to visit it when she pleased; which she did thenceforward every few days whilst it remained there.

The Flemish chronicler, whom I have quoted several times, gives a curious description of Joan's jealous amorous obsession for her husband. Philip is represented as being libidinous to the last degree, as well as being the handsomest man of his time; whilst Joan herself is praised for her beauty, grace, and delicacy. 'The good Queen fell into such jealousy that she could never get free from it, until at last it became a bad habit which reached amorous delirium, and excessive and irrepressible rage, from which for three years she got no repose or ease of mind; as if she was a woman possessed or distraught . . . She was so much troubled at the conduct of her husband that she passed her life shut up alone, avoiding the

here stated that foreign officers of the household broke up all the gold and silver plate they could lay hands on to turn into money, and pay their way back to Flanders.

sight of all persons but those who attended upon and gave her food. Her only wish was to go after her husband, whom she loved with such vehemence and frenzy, that she cared not whether her company was agreeable to him or not. When she returned to Spain, she would not rest until all the ladies that had come with them were sent home, or she threatened to make a public scandal. So far did she carry this mania, that it ended by her having no woman near her but a washerwoman, whom, at any hour that seized her caprice, she made to wash the clothes in her presence. In this state. without any women attendants, she kept close to her husband, serving herself like a poor, miserable woman. Even in the country she did not leave him, and went by his side, followed sometimes by ten thousand men, but not one person of her own sex.'[1]

The frantic jealousy of her husband during life, together with the knowledge that he was determined to confine her as a lunatic, whilst ruling her kingdom at his will, turned into gloomy misanthropy and rebellion at her fate at his death; and her refusal to sign the formal documents presented to her as Queen in the first days of her widowhood, made evident to the few nobles who kept their heads that some sort of government would have to be improvised, pending the return of Ferdinand from Naples. Juan Manuel, fiercely hated by every one, kept in the background; only hoping to save his life and some of his booty; but the stern old man in his coarse grey frock, to whom money and possessions were nothing, though, next to the Pope, he was the richest churchman in Christendom, Cardinal Jimenez, who perhaps was not

[1] 'Collection de Voyages des Souverains des Pays Bas.'

taken by surprise by the opportune disappearance of Philip, had everything ready, even before the King died, for the establishment of a provisional government; and on the day of the death a meeting of all the nobles and deputies in Burgos confirmed the arrangements he had made. All parties of nobles were represented upon the governing council; but Jimenez himself was president, and soon became autocrat by right of his ability. Order was temporarily guaranteed, and all the members, in a self-denying ordinance, undertook not to try to obtain possession of the Queen or of her younger son, Ferdinand, who was in Simancas Castle,[1] the elder, Charles, being in Flanders. Joan, sunk in lethargy, refused to sign the decrees summoning Cortes; and the latter were irregularly convoked by the government. But when they were assembled, carefully chosen under Jimenez's influence in favour of Ferdinand, Joan would not receive the members, until, under pressure, she did so only to tell them to go home and not meddle with government any more without her orders. Thus with a provisional government, whose mandate expired with the year 1506, a Queen who refused to rule, and already anarchy and rebellion rife in the South, Castilians could only pray for the prompt return of King Ferdinand, who, but a few short weeks before, had been expelled with every circumstance of insult and ignominy the realm he had ruled so long.

[1] On the very day that Philip died, an attempt was made by a faction of nobles to obtain possession of the young Prince. The keeper of the Castle of Simancas was on his guard, as he knew of the King's illness, and refused admittance to any but the two gentlemen who bore Philip's signed order for the child to be delivered to them. When the morrow brought news of the King's death, the Seneschal refused to obey the order, and defied the forces sent to capture the fortress.

No entreaty could prevail upon Joan to fulfil any of the duties of government. Her father would see to everything, she said, when he returned; all her future work in the world was to pray for the soul of her husband, and guard his dead body. On Sunday, 19th December 1906, after mass at the Cartuja, Joan announced her intention of carrying the body for sepulture in the city of Granada, near the grave of the great Isabel, in accordance with Philip's last wish.[1] The steppes of Castile in the depth of winter are as bleak and inhospitable as any tract in Europe. For scores of miles over tableland and mountain the snow lay deep, and the bitter blast swept murderously. The Queen cared for nothing but the drear burden that she carried upon the richly bedizened hearse; and with a great train of male servitors, bishops, churchmen, and choristers, she started on her pilgrimage on the 20th December.[2] The nights were to be passed in wayside inns or monasteries, and at each night's halt the grisly ceremony was gone through of opening the coffin that the Queen might fondle and kiss the dead lips and feet of what had been her husband. At one point on the way, when after nightfall the cortége entered the

[1] The monks at first flatly refused to have the corpse moved, and the Bishop of Burgos reproved the Queen. Joan, however, fell into such a fury, that they were forced to obey.

[2] An interesting letter from Ferdinand's secretary, Conchillos, who was at Burgos, to Almazan, who accompanied Ferdinand in Italy (Royal Academy of History, Salazar A 12, reproduced by Sr. Rodriguez Villa), dated 23rd December, gives a vivid picture of the confusion and scandal caused by this sudden caprice of the Queen. He says that though they had all done their best to prevent any one speaking to her but her father's partisans, the Marquis of Villena, his opponent, is the person she welcomes most. 'With this last caprice of the Queen there is no one, big or little, who any longer denies that she is out of her mind, except Juan Lopez, who says that she is as sane as her mother was, and lends her money for all this nonsense.'

courtyard of the stopping place, Joan learnt that, instead of being a monastery for men, it was a convent of nuns. Instantly her mad jealousy of women flared up, and she peremptorily ordered the coffin to be carried out of the precincts. Through the crude winter's night Joan and her attendants kept their vigil in the open field over the precious dust of Philip the Handsome, until daylight enabled them to go again upon their dreary way. Such experiences as this could not be long continued, for Joan was far advanced in pregnancy; and when she arrived at Torquemada, only some thirty miles from her starting-place, the indications of coming labour warned her that she could go no further; and here, on the 14th January 1507, her youngest child, Katharine, was born.

There is no doubt whatever that Joan was throughout carefully watched by the agents of her father and Jimenez; and that, although ostensibly a free agent, any attempt on her part to act independently or enter into a political combination would have promptly checked. Her mental malady was certainly not minimised by her father or his agents; who were as anxious to keep her in confinement now as her husband had been. Nevertheless, when every deduction has been made, it is indisputable that in her morbid condition it might have been disastrous to the country to have allowed her to exercise full political power at this time, even if she had consented to do so; though if Ferdinand had not been, as he was, solely moved by his own interests, the unhappy woman might after his arrival have been associated with him in the government, and have retained, at least, her personal liberty and ostensible sovereignty.

Jimenez, in the meanwhile, kept his hand firmly on

the helm of State. The great military orders, of which Ferdinand was perpetual Grand Master, were at his bidding, and enabled him to hold the nobles in check,[1] as well as the Flemish party, which claimed for the Emperor Maximilian the regency of Castile as representing the dead King's son Charles. The great Cardinal, far stronger than any other man in Spain, thus kept Castile from anarchy until the arrival of Ferdinand in July 1508. His methods were, of course, arbitrary and unconstitutional; for the Queen either would not, or was not allowed to, do anything; but, at least, Jimenez governed in this time of supreme crisis, as he did at a crisis even more acute on the death of Ferdinand eight years later: and when Ferdinand eventually came from Naples everything was prepared for him to govern Castile as he listed for the ends of Aragon.

So far Ferdinand had triumphed both at home and abroad. The death of Philip made it necessary for Henry of England to change his attitude and court the friendship of the King of Spain. Katharine of Aragon, the neglected and shamefully treated widowed Princess of Wales, once more found her English father-in-law all smiles and amiability. To please him further she consented to try to bring about a marriage between Henry VII., recently a widower by the death of Queen Elizabeth of York, and poor Joan, languishing by her dead husband's side at Torquemada. The proposal was a diabolical one; for Joan's madness and morbid attachment to her husband's memory had been everywhere proclaimed from the housetops: but Katharine of Aragon made no scruple at urging such a

[1] Jimenez also raised a force of one thousand picked soldiers under an Italian commander to enable him to keep the upper hand.

match, in order to improve her own position in England. Ferdinand gently dallied with the foul proposal. It was a good opportunity for gaining some concession as to the payment of Katharine's long overdue dowry, without which Henry threatened to break off her match with his son and heir. So Ferdinand wrote in March 1507 from Naples, praying that the proposal to marry Joan should be kept very secret until he arrived in Spain, or Joan 'might do something to prevent it'; but if she ever married again he promised that it should be to no one but to his good brother of England.

Whatever may have been Ferdinand's real intention, and it would appear very unlikely that he would have permitted so grasping a potentate as Henry Tudor to gain a footing, as regent or otherwise, in Castile, his agent in England was quite enamoured of this plan for getting Joan out of the way in Spain. 'No king in the world,' he wrote on the 15th April 1507, 'would make so good a husband (as Henry VII.) for the Queen of Castile, whether she be sane or insane. She might recover her reason when wedded to such a husband; but even in that case King Ferdinand would, at all events, be sure to retain the Regency of Castile. On the other hand, if the insanity of the Queen should prove incurable, it would perhaps be not inconvenient that she should live in England. The English do not seem to mind her insanity much; especially as it is asserted that her mental malady will not prevent childbearing.[1]

Whilst Katharine in England was, as she says, 'baiting' Henry VII. for her own benefit with the tempting morsel of the marriage with Joan, and the King of France was offering the hand of a French

[1] Puebla to Ferdinand, Spanish Calendar, vol. i. 409.

prince, the Queen of Castile remained in lethargic isolation at Torquemada, though the plague raged through the summer in the over-crowded village. Joan had been told by some roguish friar that Philip would come to life again there, and she obstinately stayed on in the face of danger; saying when she was urged to go to the neighbouring city of Palencia, where there was more accommodation, that it was not meet that a widow should be seen in public, and the only move she would consent to make was to a small place called Hornillos, a few miles from Torquemada, in April.[1] She spoke little, and with the exception of listening to music, of which she was fond, she had no amusement; but it is evident from at least one incident that, however strange her conduct might be, she was not deprived entirely of her reason. Jimenez had obtained from her a decree dismissing all the Councillors appointed by Philip. These favourites of her husband were naturally furious, and demanded audience of the Queen at Hornillos. They were received by her in the church where the corpse of Philip was deposited. 'Who put you into the Council? she asked them. 'We were appointed by a decree issued and signed by your Highness,' they replied. An angry exchange of words then took place, and Joan, turning to the Marquis of Villena,[2] who was behind her, told him that it was his smartness that brought such affront as this upon her. Then she declared in a resolute tone that it was her wish that every one should return to the office or position he held before she and her husband landed in Spain; so that when King Ferdi-

[1] Peter Martyr, Epistolæ.

[2] Villena was against Ferdinand, though Joan liked him. She probably meant that it was he who had inspired the protest.

nand arrived he should find everything as it used to be in his time. This, of course, was a victory for Ferdinand's party, but it is clear that Joan knew what she was talking about on this occasion.[1]

At length, in the early autumn of 1507, came the happy news that King Ferdinand had landed at Valencia; and, accompanied by a large force, was entering Castile; being generally welcomed by nobles and people.[2] As soon as Joan learnt that her father had entered her realm, she caused a *Te Deum* to be sung in the church of Hornillos, and set forth to receive him, carrying always the corpse of her husband, and travelling only by night, as was now her custom. At a small place called Tortoles, about twenty-five miles beyond Valladolid, father and daughter met. The King approached, surrounded and followed by great crowds of nobles and prelates. He was met at the door of the house by Joan, attended by her half-sister and the Marchioness of Denia; and as he doffed his cap she threw back the black hood which she wore as a Flemish widow, and bared the white coif with which

[1] The Castilian jealousy of Aragonese government, which was really at the bottom of the adherence of the nobility to Philip, was not by any means dead; and, but for the firmness of Jimenez and the diplomacy of Ferdinand, it is quite probable that a league of nobles would have seized Joan at this time and have governed in her name. Most of the greater Castilian nobles appear to have made mutual protests against the assumption of rule in Castile by Ferdinand; and in the archives of the Duke of Frias there is one dated 19th June 1507, just before Ferdinand landed at Valencia, and signed by the Marquis Pacheco, solemnly repudiating Ferdinand as King, swearing to be loyal to Joan, and attributing anything that he may subsequently do to the contrary effect, to intimidation and force. As these protests were kept secret the nobles made themselves safe either way.

[2] The Marquis of Villena had just been brought to his side, and somewhat later Juan Manuel was bribed to give up his fortresses, though he himself retired to Flanders, for he would never trust Ferdinand. The only great noble who continued to hold out was the Duke of Najera.



JOAN THE MAD WITH THE UNBURIED BODY OF HER HUSBAND.

After a Painting by Pradilla.

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her hair was covered. Casting herself upon her knees she sought to kiss her father's hand; but he also knelt and embraced her tenderly; leading her afterwards by the hand into the house. Every sign of dutiful submission was given by Joan to her father; and after several long private conferences between them, Ferdinand announced that she had delegated to him the government of Castile.

A few days afterwards the whole court moved to another small place, called Santa Maria del Campo, a few miles nearer Burgos, Joan, as usual, travelling by night, accompanied by the coffin; and here, at Santa Maria, the grand anniversary funeral service for Philip was celebrated (25th September 1507), and Jimenez received the Cardinal's hat, though Joan would not allow that joyous ceremony, as she said, to be held in the church that held her husband's remains. With infinite trouble Ferdinand at length persuaded his daughter to accompany him to a larger town, where more comfort could be obtained, and in early October they set forth, Ferdinand travelling by day and Joan by night. Suddenly, however, Joan guessed that they were taking her to Burgos, that dreadful city where Philip had died. No consideration would induce her to go another step in that direction; and she took up her residence at Arcos, a few miles away, whilst Ferdinand established himself at Burgos with his young French wife, whom Joan received politely.

At Arcos Joan, with her two children, Ferdinand and Katharine, lived her strange, solitary life for eighteen months, broken only when Ferdinand, going in July 1508 to reduce Andalusia to order, decided to take his favourite little grandson and namesake with him. Joan flew into a fury when she learnt that her

child was to be taken from her; and there is no doubt that the disturbance thus caused aggravated her malady for a time, although it is said that she forgot the boy in a few days. A curious idea of her life at Arcos is given in a letter sent on the 9th October 1508 by the Bishop of Malaga, her confessor, to the King. 'As I wrote before, since your Highness left, the Queen has been quiet, both in word and action; and she has not injured or abused any one. I forgot to say that since then she has not changed her linen, nor dressed her hair, nor washed her face. They tell me also that she always sleeps on the ground, as before.' There follow some medical details, from which the Bishop draws the conclusion that the Queen would not live long. 'It is not meet,' he says, 'that she should have the management of her own person, as she takes so little care of herself. Her lack of cleanliness in her face, and they say elsewhere, is very great, and she eats with the plates on the floor, and no napkin. She very often misses hearing mass, because she is breakfasting at the hour it is celebrated, and there is no opportunity of her hearing it before noon.'[1]

Before leaving to suppress the revolt in Andalucia, Ferdinand took effective measures to prevent Joan from being made a tool of faction. He had tried without success to prevail upon her to remove to the remote town of Tordesillas, on the river Douro, where there was a commodious castle-palace fit for her habitation, and the climate was good; but he posted around Arcos strong forces, commanded by faithful partisans, with orders that if the Queen at last gave way to the persuasion of her attendants, and removed to Tordesillas, the troops were to guard her just as

[1] Copied by Rodriguez Villa.

closely and secretly there. But Joan obstinately refused to move; and Ferdinand found her still there when he returned from the South in February 1509. Whilst he had been absent, the great magnate in whose district of Burgos Arcos was situated, the Constable of Castile (Count de Haro) had been coquetting with the Emperor Maximilian to displace Ferdinand by his grandson Charles, now nine years old; and the possession of the person of Joan was of the highest importance. Ferdinand decided, therefore, that, either willingly or unwillingly, Joan should be placed where she would be safe from capture by surprise. When he visited her at Arcos, he found her thin and weak with the cold, unhealthy climate.[1] 'Her dress was such as on no account could be allowed, or is fit even to write about, and everything else looked similarly, and as if it would be totally impossible for her to go through another winter if she continued to live in the same way.'

The King stayed with her for some days, without broaching the sore subject of removing her; but on the 14th February 1509, he had her aroused at three o'clock in the morning—since he knew she would not travel in daylight—and told her she must prepare to be gone. She offered no resistance, but only pleaded for one day to prepare, which was granted; and she consented to cast away the filthy rags which she had been wearing, and don proper garments before setting out on the journey to her new home; carrying her little daughter, Katharine, with her; the corpse of Philip on its great hearse drawn by four horses, as usual, leading the way. Although it was evening

[1] It is in the immediate neighbourhood of Burgos, and one of the coldest places in Spain.

when she started, great crowds of people had flocked over from Burgos to see their Queen, who had been invisible for so long, and was by many thought to be dead.

As the morning sun on the third day was glinting with horizontal rays the bare brown cornlands that stretch for many miles around Tordesillas on both sides of the turbid Douro, the wan and weary cavalcade rode over the ancient bridge. Between the main street and the river stood a fortress-palace with frowning walls and little windows looking across the road at the convent of Saint Clara, with its florid Gothic church and cloisters. Into the palace rode, by her father's side, with her face shrouded, Joan, Queen of Castile; and thenceforward, for forty-seven dreary years, the palace was her prison, until, an old, broken woman of seventy-six, but wayward and rebellious to the last, she joined her long-lost husband in the splendid sepulchre in Granada. From the windows of Joan's early apartment in the palace, she could see the coffin of Philip deposited in the convent cloister, and in the first years of her confinement, she kept her vigil over the corpse in most of her waking hours, as well as on rare occasions, and closely guarded, attending commemoratory services in the convent in honour of the dead, until her undutiful son, the Emperor Charles, either overcoming her resistance, or perhaps finding the dismal caprice outworn, transferred the mouldering remains of Philip the Handsome to its last abiding place; whilst Joan the Mad waited for her release with fierce defiance in her heart, and revilings on her tongue for all that her oppressors held sacred.

It would not be profitable, even if it were possible, to follow closely the monotonous life of Joan during

her long years of confinement; but, at certain crises in the political history of her country, her personality assumed temporary importance, and on these occasions a flood of light is thrown upon her, which, to some extent, will enable us to see the reality and extent of her malady, and to judge how far her laxity in religious observance was the cause of her continued incarceration. Mr. Bergenroth, in his introduction to the early volumes of the Calendars of Spanish State Papers, very forcibly urges the view that Joan was not really mad at all, and that she was sacrificed solely to the ambition of her husband, her father and her son, in succession. After carefully considering all the documents adduced by my learned predecessor as Editor of the Calendars, and many in the Spanish Royal Academy of History which were unknown to him, I find myself unable to come to the same conclusion. The separate accounts of her behaviour are so numerous, and many of them so disinterested, as to leave in my mind no reasonable doubt that after Philip's death, whatever may have been the case before, Joan was not responsible for all her actions. She appears to have been able on many occasions to discuss complicated subjects quite rationally, as is not infrequent with people undoubtedly insane, but her outbursts of rage against religious ceremonies, her neglect of her person, her persistence for days in refusing food, and other aberrations, are not only clearly indicative of lunacy, but were the symptoms repeated exactly in the case of her great grandson, Don Carlos, who was undoubtedly insane. At the same time it is clear to see that there was no reason for keeping her closely confined and isolated under strong guard, except the dread of Ferdinand, and afterwards of Charles, that leagues of

nobles might make use of her to weaken the power of the Castilian crown.[1] That this fear was not groundless has already been shown, and at one point, as will be related presently, the peril was imminent. That Joan did not seize the opportunity when it was offered to her after her bitter complaints of her treatment is, in my view, the best proof that she was not capable of independent rule.

Ferdinand died in January 1516, leaving the whole of his realms to his grandson Charles in Flanders, in view of Joan's 'mental incapacity.' He tried almost with his last breath to divide Spain for the benefit of his younger son, Ferdinand; but was overborne by the remonstrances of his Council. Jimenez was appointed to be Regent until the new King arrived; and when Cardinal Adrian, Charles's ambassador, claimed the Regency in virtue of a secret authority he produced, Jimenez accepted him as colleague, but made him a cypher. Up to this period Joan had been under the care of Ferdinand's faithful Aragonese friend, Mosen Ferrer. the man whom rumour accused of having poisoned Philip: whilst her principal lady in waiting was the Dowager Countess of Salinas. The personal guard of the Queen was entrusted to the incorruptible *Monteros de Espinosa*, and there were some companies of Castilians on duty in, and around, the palace. Mosen Ferrer was hated, especially by the townspeople of Tordesillas and by the Castilian attendants of Joan, because it was asserted that he had treated the Queen cruelly, and had not attempted to cure her. He gave strict orders that Joan should

[1] And at a later period, when that danger was at an end, the fear of scandal being caused in a court so slavishly Catholic by Joan's violent hatred of the religious services.

not be told of her father's death; but such news could not be hidden, for all Castile was astir to know what was coming next.

Many of the nobles were around young Ferdinand, and were claiming Castile for him, in accordance with the old King's penultimate wish; and not a few were looking towards Queen Joan. When she first heard the news she was disturbed to know that Jimenez was not on the spot when the King died, but was tranquilised to learn that he was on the way, and would promptly assume the government. No sooner was it known in Tordesillas that Ferdinand was dead than the townspeople and the Castilian guards endeavoured to enter the Queen's apartments and expel Mosen Ferrer: but the latter and the *Monteros de Espinosa*[1] stood firm, and for weeks the feud continued. The Guards brought an exorcising priest to cast out the devils that afflicted the Queen; but Ferrer would not let them enter the room; though they got into an antechamber, where, quite unknown to the Queen, the exorciser performed his futile incantations through a hole in the door. As soon as Jimenez had established himself in the regency, he sent the Bishop of Majorca to set matters right in Tordesillas. Ferrer, intensely indignant at the accusations against him, wrote a letter to the Regent, which, being read between the lines, tells us much. How could he hope to cure the Queen when her own father could not do so? and how could he be so bad a man as they say, if wise King Ferdinand entrusted his daughter to his care? This does not seem very convincing: but when he tries to excuse

[1] This strangely privileged corps has always had the duty to guard the sovereigns of Castile personally inside their apartments. The men are all drawn by right from the inhabitants of the town of Espinosa only.

himself Ferrer makes matters much worse. It was, he says, only to prevent the Queen from starving herself to death that he had put her to the torture (*dar cuerda*). He complains bitterly that though he is not dismissed he is not allowed to go near the Queen, for fear he should injure her health. Jimenez, probably recognising that Ferrer had thought more of Aragonese interests than of the health of Joan, thereupon let him go, and appointed the Duke of Estrada to be her Keeper.

The first instructions sent by the new King Charles, whose age was barely sixteen, to the Regent Jimenez concerned Joan. Her custody was so important, he said, that he agreed, in view of the dissensions amongst Spaniards, that a Fleming should guard her. Until one was appointed he directed that 'whilst she was to be very well treated, she was to be so closely guarded that if any body should attempt to thwart my good intentions they may not be able to do it. It is more my duty than that of any one to care for the honour, contentment, and solace of the Queen; and if any one else attempts to interfere it will be with an evil object.[1] Nevertheless many did attempt to interfere by whispering doubts to Joan of her Flemish eldest son, in the interests of his young brother Ferdinand, whom his mother and all Spaniards loved best; and when in September 1517 one of the *monteros* approached her and said: 'Madam, our sovereign lord King Charles, your highness' son, has arrived in Spain,' Joan burst forth in a great rage. 'I alone am Queen: my son

[1] Calendar, Spanish State Papers, Supplement to vol. i. All the documents quoted in narrating this period of Joan's life are from the same source, and from the collection of the Royal Academy of History (Rodriguez Villa).

Charles is but the prince,' and she always resisted calling him King thenceforward.

Charles and his sister Leonora came to Tordesillas to see their mother in December. Charles's tutor and counsellor, Chièvres, first saw Joan to break to her the news of the presence of her children; and when, immediately afterwards, they entered the room and knelt before their mother, she was overcome with joy to see those whom she had left as little children twelve years before, now in the best period of adolescence. When Charles and his sister had retired, Chièvres lost no time in saying that in order to relieve the Queen, and accustom Charles to rule, it would be well to entrust the government of Spain to him. Joan made no great objection to this; but it is clear that her intention was, that he should administer the government for her and not rule on his own account as he subsequently did; and when, a few months afterwards, Charles met the Cortes at Valladolid they would only confirm his power as joint sovereign, jealous as they were of Flemings, on condition that he swore that if ever Joan recovered her faculties he would resign the government to her.[1] Thenceforward Joan, though her name appeared for years on decrees and proclamations, was politically dead.

[1] By a long series of intrigues Chièvres had forced the hands of Jimenez to have Charles and Joan proclaimed joint sovereigns even before the arrival of the former. The Pope and the Emperor had been persuaded to address Charles as Catholic King upon Ferdinand's death; but in the face of the discontent of the Castilian nobles it was necessary for Charles at last to make all manner of promises as to his future residence in Spain, respect for Spanish traditions, and avoidance of using Spanish money for foreign purposes, as well as that to which reference is made in the text with regard to Joan, before he could be fully acknowledged. He broke most of his pledges at once, and so precipitated the great rising of the *Comuneros*. See 'Vie de Chièvres' by Varilla.

During his stay at Tordesillas, Charles was distressed to see the sad fate of his young sister, Katharine, now aged eleven. Joan was fiercely attached to her, and would hardly let her out of her sight. The child's rooms were behind those of the Queen, and could only be reached with Joan's knowledge; little Katharine's sole amusement being to look through a window which had been specially cut for her, and watch the people going to the opposite church, and the children playing in the side lane that led to the river, who were encouraged by money to play there for her amusement. She never left the palace, and was dressed in mean rags, such as the Queen herself wore, and Charles, knowing that the Queen would never let the child go willingly, somewhat cruelly planned to have her kidnapped. He caused a way into her apartment to be broken through a tapestry-covered wall from an adjoining gallery; and the girl and her female attendants were carried away at dead of night to a large force of horsemen and ladies awaiting her on the opposite side of the bridge across the Douro; and thence spirited away to Valladolid, where, dressed in fitting splendour, she was lodged in her sister Leonora's palace. When, in the morning, Joan discovered her loss, she was inconsolable. She would neither eat, drink, nor sleep, she said, until her child was restored to her, and after two days had passed, and she still stood firm, the King had to be asked what was to be done. He was loath to give up the education of his sister; for princesses were valuable dynastic and international assets; but there was no other way but to send her back. Charles accompanied her to Tordesillas, and made terms with Joan; the girl must have proper companions and

attendants, she must dress suitably to her rank, and she must be allowed some little relaxation and liberty outside the palace. To this Joan consented, and Katharine lived with her until her marriage with the King of Portugal six years later.

In March 1518, Charles appointed to the custody of the Queen, the Marquis of Denia, who held her until his death, and was succeeded by his son. Soon after his appointment, he wrote a letter to the King which lifts the veil considerably on Joan's condition. She tried, he says, persistently and with artful words, remarkable for one in her condition, to persuade him to take her out of her prison, and to summon the nobles of Castile, as she was discontented at the way she was being kept out of the government, and wished to complain. He details the excuses with which he put her requests aside, and evidently looks upon her blandishments as wiles to escape; but assures Charles, as he did for many years afterwards, that 'nothing should be done against his interests,' whatever that may have meant. But even in this letter we see signs of Joan's undoubted madness. A day or two before she had thrown some pitchers at two of her women, and hurt them; and when Denia went with a grave face to her and said, 'How is this, my lady? This is a strange way to treat your servants; your mother treated hers better;' Joan rose hurriedly, and the very act of her rising sent her servants scurrying off in a fright. 'I am not so violent as to do you any injury,' she said; and so began again, and for the next five hours, to try by wheedling to get him to take her out, 'for she could not bear these women.'

In reply to this, Charles warned Denia that his conversations with the Queen must never be over-

heard by anybody, and that all his letters about her must be strictly secret. Thus every few days news of his mother reached the young King, sometimes reporting improvement, sometimes the reverse; but always harping upon her desire to get out, her dislike of her woman attendants, and her extreme irregularity in getting up and eating, which she often did only at intervals of two days. At this time, too, began to develop her great repugnance to attend mass. The women seem to have been a great source of trouble to every one. They were, it appears, always gadding about the town, telling people of what passed in the palace, and what the Queen said, especially about religion, and her desire to go out, and to summon the grandees. What was worse, they defied Denia to dismiss them, until the King gave him full authority over them, and brought them to reason. In the autumn of the same year, 1518, there was a visitation of plague in the country, though Tordesillas had not suffered much, owing to the scrupulous care taken to isolate the place. The removal of the Queen, however, had to be considered. 'If it be necessary,' wrote the Marquis, 'we shall want saddle mules with black velvet housings for the Queen and the Infanta. . . . It will also be necessary to take the body of the King, your father, and if this has to be done, we must put into proper order the car in which it was brought here, as it is now dismantled. Charles was against any removal if it could possibly be avoided, but if quite unavoidable, the Queen might be taken to the monastery of St. Paul at Moralejo, near Arevalo. If she refused to go, she must be taken by force; but with as much respect as possible, and with every precaution against her endeavouring to stay in the open on the way. If she

wanted the corpse of Philip to go with her, a dummy coffin might be made up and carried, whilst the real one with the body remained behind at Tordesillas.

The plague passed away, and the move was not made; and so things passed with Joan as before. Squalid and unhappy, she resisted as obstinately as ever the pressure put upon her to attend mass, though more than once she was violently desirous of going over in Holy Week, or other anniversaries, to the convent church of St Clara, and on several occasions had her clothes washed in preparation for the great event; which Denia himself was inclined to allow, under strict guard, as people in the town were tattling about her being kept a prisoner. Great efforts were made by Juan de Avila, the chaplain, to bring Joan to a better frame of mind about religion; and in June 1519 he writes a curious letter to the King, beseeching him to do his duty by his mother; 'especially for the salvation of her soul.' Perhaps in answer to this Charles ordered Denia to insist that the Queen should hear mass. She had wished it to be said at the end of a corridor, instead of in a special room adjoining her own, as Denia desired, and, at last, rather than she should not hear it at all, she was allowed to have her way; and an altar and chapel were screened off by black velvet hangings at the end of the corridor. She went through the service with great devotion until the *evangelium* and the *pax* were brought to her, when she refused them, but motioned that they should be administered to her daughter.

This attendance at mass continued for some time, to the immense jubilation of Denia and the priests; but as the day approached when Charles was to leave Spain for Germany to claim the imperial crown, in

consequence of Maximilian's death (January 1519), the effervescence and discontent in Castile at the prospect of an absentee King drawing money from Spain for foreign purposes, penetrated in some mysterious way the prison-palace of Joan the Mad. For hours the Queen railed at Denia for not having summoned the Grandees, as she had requested him to do so often. She was being disgracefully treated, she said; everything belonged to her, and yet she was being denied what she required. She excitedly summoned the treasurer, and demanded money of him, which he was not allowed to give her. So vehement did she become, that at last Denia forbade any one to speak to her at all. She would go to Valladolid, she said; and at another time she would dress to go over to the convent church, though she was not allowed to go. She ordered Denia to write to her son, asking that she should be better treated; and that the grandees should come to her to consult about the realm. Denia, at his wit's end to pacify her, on one occasion, for, as he says, 'she uses words fit to make the very stones rise,' had the inspiration to mention her father, as if he were still alive, and at the head of affairs; and for a time all the disagreeable answers given to her were said to be by order of King Ferdinand, for whose wisdom she had a great respect. But this lie gave her a new idea. If her father were alive, he could help her; and she ordered Denia to write and tell him that she could no longer stand the life she led. She was badly treated, and as a prisoner, her son, Ferdinand, had been taken away from her, and she feared they were going to rob her of her daughter Katharine; but, if they did, she would kill herself. Denia fell more and more into her black books, as the discontent at Charles's departure

grew in the country, and echoes reached the Queen's prison of the public indignation at her seclusion, and wild rumours of intentions to rescue her. On one occasion (July 1520) she ordered Denia to open a doorway from her apartments into the corridor where mass was said. He was suspicious and refused, whereupon she fell into a violent rage with him, and heaped upon him outrageous words without measure. No wonder the poor man deplores that everybody believes he keeps her prisoner (as indeed he did, though he says not), and he advocates her entire seclusion, although the best way to undeceive the people, he says, would be to let them see her, and recognise her sad condition.

Charles sailed from Corunna on 20th May 1520. During the time he had been in Spain he, or rather his rude, greedy gang of Flemings, had driven Castilians to desperation. Jimenez, who had held the country for him in his absence in the face of the nobles and young Ferdinand, had been contemptuously dismissed — and probably poisoned on Charles' arrival: young Ferdinand had been packed off to Flanders: Flemings had crowded all the great posts, to the exclusion of Spaniards: Joan was not presented before the Cortes as Queen jointly with her son, as she should have been; and now, to crown all, the Constitution of Castile had been violated by the insolent young foreigner who was to rule, not Spain alone, but half the world. He had held a Castilian Cortes outside the limits of Castile itself, and had coerced the deputies to vote him large sums of money to be spent away from Spain. The nobles were already seething with discontent, and now the people in the towns, who paid all the taxes, rose and

hanged some of the deputies who had voted away their money for an absent king.

Then, like a well-laid train, all Castile blazed into revolt. It was a great social, industrial and political struggle, which ended in the financial impotence of the Cortes of Castile, and the decadence of the Castilian nobility. The complicated details of the revolt cannot here be told, but only those points in which Joan was personally concerned. The governing committee of the revolutionary Comuneros met at Avila at the end of July 1520, headed by the gentry, and, to some extent, secretly encouraged by the great nobles. The Flemish Regent, Cardinal Adrian, was paralysed with dismay at the extent of the rising, and did nothing; whilst to the cry of 'Long live the King and Queen: down with evil ministers,' every Spanish heart responded. The manifesto published by the committee announced that the revolutionaries had risen in the interests of the imprisoned Queen Joan; and early in August a committee of the council of Castile, the supreme executive body of the Regent's government, with its president, Bishop Rojas, presented themselves before Joan in her palace of Tordesillas, to beg her to sign decrees against those who were in arms. Joan was to all appearance calm, and replied to the demand for her signature, 'It is now fifteen years that I have been kept from the government and badly treated; and this marquis here' (pointing to Denia), 'is he who has lied to me most.' Denia, confused, replied: 'It is true, my lady, that I have lied to you, but I have done so to overcome certain prejudices of yours. I may tell you now, that your father is dead, and I buried him.' The Queen shed tears at this, and turning to Rojas, murmured

between her sobs, 'Bishop, believe me, all that I see and hear is like a dream.' Rojas pressed his point. 'My lady, I can assure you that your signature to these papers will work a greater miracle than Saint Francis; for, after God, in your hands now rests the salvation of these realms.' 'Rest now,' replied the Queen, 'and come back another day.'

On the morrow the committee of the council saw the Queen again, and as there was no seat but hers in the room, the president mentioned that it was not meet that they should be kept standing. 'Bring a seat for the council,' directed the Queen; but, as the attendants were bringing in chairs, she said, 'No, no, not chairs, but a bench; that was the rule in my mother's time: but the bishop may have a chair.' After another long conference the Queen directed the committee to return to Valladolid and discuss again, in full council the papers to which they requested her signature; and thus, unsatisfied, the members left her, only to find themselves prisoners at Valladolid, which was now in the hands of the rebels, who were rapidly marching upon Tordesillas at the urgent request of the townspeople of the latter place, to save Queen Joan from being carried away by the government party.

The rebels had no time to communicate with Joan as to their aims before they appeared outside the walls of the town on the 29th August. As soon as Joan learnt of their coming she ordered the townspeople to welcome them; and so, amidst salute of cannon and enthusiastic cheers, Padilla, the rebel leader, and his host were escorted into the town, and passed before the Queen, who stood in a balcony of the palace. After resting and changing their garments, Padilla

and other chiefs sought audience of the Queen. Joan received him smilingly. 'Who are you?' she asked, as he knelt before her. 'I am Juan Padilla, my lady,' he replied, 'son of the captain-general of Castile, a servant of Queen Isabel, as I am a servant of your Highness.' And then the insurgent chief told the astonished Queen all that had happened since old King Ferdinand died: how the evil foreign advisers of young Charles had brought all Spain into revolt, and that Padilla and the commons of Castile were ready to die in the service of their own Queen Joan. She expressed her wonderment at all this. She had been kept a prisoner, she said, for nearly sixteen years, and Denia, her gaoler, had hidden everything from her. If she had been sure of her father's death she would have gone forth and have prevented some of this trouble in her realm. Then, addressing Padilla, she said: 'Go now; I order you to exercise the authority of captain-general of the realm. Look to all things carefully, until I order otherwise.'

Joan thus made herself the ostensible head of the revolution; and on many subsequent occasions conferred with the leaders in arms at Tordesillas, fully approving of their proceedings and aims. She tried to exonerate Charles on account of his youth and inexperience of Spain, but clearly indicated her intention to govern for herself in future. Most important of all, she authorised the leaders to summon the Cortes to meet at Tordesillas. The weak, foreign Cardinal Regent could only ascribe Joan's attitude to her madness; though, as he wrote to Charles, the people regard it as a proof of her sanity. Denia was now almost a prisoner, but the revolutionary leaders could never persuade

Joan to sign his formal dismissal, though they, on their own authority, turned both the marquis and his wife unceremoniously out of the town when Tordesillas became the centre of the rebel government in September, and the Cortes held its sittings there.[1]

Joan met her Parliament in the hall of the palace, and listened patiently to the lengthy harangues of the deputies. In her reply, which seems to have been extempore, she spoke at great length of her father, whose death had been concealed from her. During his life she was at ease, because she knew no one would dare to do harm. But she now saw how the country and herself had been abused and deceived, to the injury of the people whom she loved so much. She wished she were in some place where she could direct affairs better; but as her father had placed her there, either because of the woman who took her mother's place, or for some other reason, she could do no more than she had done. She wondered that the Spaniards had not avenged themselves before upon the foreigners who had come with her son. She thought at first that these foreigners had meant well to her boys; whom they had, she was told, taken back to Flanders; but she saw differently now, and she hoped no one here had any evil meaning towards her

[1] Denia told the rebels that he had appealed to the Queen for a certificate of his dismissal, but what he really asked for was her written order to stay. In reply, she told him to go about his business and talk to her no more. He was, however, successful in getting a letter from the young Infanta to the revolutionary Junta praying them not to send the marchioness away, but it had no effect. The Infanta got into sad disgrace with her brother for her alleged kindness and sympathy with the rebels, but she spiritedly defended herself, and appealed to this letter of hers in favour of the Denias as proof that she did what she could in very difficult and dangerous circumstances. (Letters from Simancas copied by Senor Rodriguez Villa.)

sons. Even if she were not the Queen she ought to have been better treated, for, at least, she was the daughter of great sovereigns ; and she was in favour of the Comuneros, because she saw they were anxious to remedy the abuses of which she complained. All this seemed quite sane, but at the end of the speech there is a pathetic ring of self-distrust that tells the sad tale. 'To the extent of my power I will see to affairs, either here or elsewhere. But if, whilst I am here, I cannot do much it will be because I am obliged to spend some time in calming my heart and strengthening my spirit, on the death of the King, my husband. But as long as I am in disposition for it, I will attend to affairs.'[1]

The democratic excesses of the revolutionary Committee, together with the diplomacy of Charles, were gradually enlisting the great nobles on the side of the government. Although Joan's attendants generally were in her favour, and continued to assert her sanity now they had got rid of the Denias, her confessor, Juan de Avila, was always secretly faithful to the Regent ; and whispered warnings constantly in the Queen's ear. It was evident after a short time also to the revolutionary junta that Joan was not sane ; as they wrote from Tordesillas to the city of Valladolid saying that they had summoned all the best physicians in Spain to her ; and, apparently finding human aid powerless, they had ordered processions and prayers for her restoration to health. The Regent, indeed, writing to Charles in October, says that the Queen cannot last long if she does not escape from the power of the rebel government ; as she was much worse after

[1] It was one of the principal allegations of the government, that, although Joan never signed anything for the rebels, her verbal orders were at once taken down in notarial form and acted upon as royal decrees.

Denia went. She no longer sleeps in a bed, he says, nor eats regularly, but keeps her food all around her cold until it goes bad. At another time, after she had eaten nothing for three days, she was given the accumulated food of the whole period at once. The government party asserted that all the poor woman's crazy caprices were acceded to, and even threats resorted to by the junta, in order to get her to sign the decrees necessary to legitimise their action; but she continued obstinate in her refusal to put her hand to anything.[1]

The junta began to grow desperate; for the forces against them were growing daily, whilst they made no progress, depending, as they did, for legality upon obtaining the signature of a lunatic. They tried to bribe the poor woman to sign by promising to take her away from Tordesillas; but that was fruitless: on another occasion, in the middle of the night, a hue and cry was raised that the Constable of Castile with a great force of government troops was outside, and the Queen was told that the 'tyrants' had come to seize her. 'Tell the Constable,' she replied, 'not to do anything until the daylight comes; and then I will see about it.' Things thus went from bad to worse for the rebellion. This was the one chance of Joan's life, and she missed it. For months she trifled and smiled upon the rebel junta, but would sign nothing; and early in December the government troops were strong enough to make a dash for Tordesillas, which they took by assault after four hours of desperate fighting; the rebel junta flying in a panic from the place. Joan welcomed the victors with a smiling face. She had

[1] One of her demands was that all her women should be sent away, as they were. Her hatred of her own sex was remarkable.

been expecting and wishing they would come, she said; and had ordered that the nobles should be admitted before the fight began.

During the battle she with the Infanta had left the palace, carrying her jewels with them, and had ordered the corpse of Philip to be taken from the church and carried with them out of the town. Before it could be done, in the confusion, the royal troops entered, and they found the Queen and her daughter crouched in the doorway of the palace trembling with fright. The great nobles who came to the capture of Tordesillas were full of lip service to Joan, and she, flattered apparently by their deference, professed delight at their coming; but from the moment the rebel junta fled before the Constable's troops at Tordesillas without her signature, Joan was a closely watched prisoner. Denia and his wife, with their harsh methods, came back, to the loudly expressed disgust, not only of Joan, but of some of the greatest of the Castilian nobles, who saw how his presence irritated her;[1] but Charles would permit no change in his mother's keeper, for he knew he could depend upon Denia to keep her close.

In April 1521, the Comuneros were finally crushed at the battle of Villalar, and the yoke of imperialism forged unwittingly by Ferdinand the Catholic, and open-eyed by Charles the Emperor, was fixed upon the neck of Spain until it strangled her. Thence-

[1] The Admiral of Castile and other nobles at the time endeavoured to prevail upon Joan to take the direction of affairs under *their* guidance; but she refused just as obstinately to give her signature to them as she had to the rebels. Denia writes to the Emperor that the Admiral is very anxious to cure the Queen; but in no case will it be allowed without the Emperor's permission. 'Besides, it would be another resurrection of Lazarus.' The bitterest complaints of Denia and his methods were sent by the great nobles to Charles, whilst Denia could say no good word for them.

forward Joan was but a shadow in the world, to which she no longer appertained.

The person most to be pitied, until marriage rescued her in 1524, was the poor young Infanta Katharine. The Denias came back vowing vengeance against every one who they thought had been polite to the rebels, and the Infanta, as well as the Queen, had to feel their petty tyranny. The girl wrote indignantly to her brother of the wretched straits to which she was reduced by them, and also of the persecution of her mother by them. Amongst other complaints, the following may be quoted. 'For the love of God, pray order that if the Queen wishes to walk in the gallery looking on to the river, or in the matted corridor, or to leave her chamber for pastime, they shall not prevent her from doing so. And pray do not allow the servants and daughters of the marchioness, or others, to go to my closet through the Queen's rooms, but only the persons who serve; because, in order that the Queen may not see them, the marchioness orders the women to shut the Queen up in her chamber, and will not allow her to go into the passages or hall, but keep her in the chamber where there is no light but candles; for there is nowhere else for her to go, and she will not leave the chamber until she is dragged out: or, if she would, the women are there to prevent her.' This is the Infanta's own version; but the Denias' story is that the young princess is not allowed by her mother to see any one but a common servant, and has not the fit company of ladies. To make matters worse for the girl the Denias accused her of favouring the rebels, which she indignantly denied, and made peace successfully with her brother. Her departure from Tordesillas for her

marriage afflicted Joan greatly, and for the rest of the Queen's life there was no one to stand between the emperor and her gaolers.

During the long years of Joan's seclusion, the principal feature of her aberration was its anti-religious tendency. It is true that she often demanded the summoning of the nobles, and continued her eccentricity in eating and sleeping, but the strange antipathy she showed, and often violently expressed, to the services of her church, was a scandal worse than any in a country where thousands of people were being burnt for a tenth part of what the Queen allowed herself to say and do. The whole of the emperor's system was based upon the enforcement of universal religious orthodoxy by Spain: and it was a bitter affliction for him to know that his mother, and rightful Queen, was madly opposed, at intervals, to the ceremonies imposed upon the rest of Spaniards. Denia in his letters to the Emperor, on several occasions, drops dark hints that torture should be applied —as it evidently had been applied to Joan years before by Mosen Ferrer. Speaking of her obstinacy soon after the rebel defeat, and advising that she should be transferred to the fortress of Arevalo, which he thought safer and more loyal to Charles, he says: 'Your Majesty may be sure that this will not be done with the Queen's goodwill, for it is not to be expected that a person who refuses to do anything beneficial, either for her body or her soul, but does quite the contrary, will agree to this. And, in good truth, if your Majesty would use pressure [1]

[1] Mr Bergenroth translated '*hacerle premia*,' 'applying torture,' and it may be so translated. I prefer, however, the wider interpretation; though, no doubt, Denia meant to recommend physical coercion.

upon her in many things, you would serve God and benefit her Highness, for people in her condition really need it. Your grandmother, Queen Isabel, served her Highness, her daughter, in this way, but your Majesty will do as you think best.'

Denia, whilst recommending the employment of force for the removal of the Queen, did not wish to appear personally as the instrument, but recommended that the President of the Council of Castile should be sent with the Emperor's order for her to submit, and if she resisted, to have her seized and put into a litter by force in the night time, and carried off. The removal of the Queen, often urged by Denia for years, on the ground of the accessibility of Tordesillas to disaffected people, does not seem ever to have taken place.[1] Denia's desire to lodge Joan in a strong isolated fortress is also explained by him on the ground of the scandal caused by the Queen's religious attitude. In the letter just quoted, where he recommends torture, he relates that on Christmas night, whilst early matins were being sung in the presence of the Infanta, the Queen came in search of her daughter, and screamed out in anger for them to clear the altar of everything upon it; and she had to be forcibly taken back to her rooms. He relates also that: 'She often goes into the gallery overlooking the river, and calls to any one she sees to summon the troops to kill each other. Your majesty may judge from all this what is best to do, and what we have to put up with.'

These hints at personal punishment of the Queen are repeated again and again over a series of years by Denia, though, so far as can be gathered from the

[1] The Emperor ordered her to be taken to Toro in 1527, but Denia was afraid of forcing her to go.

Emperor's replies, he gave no instructions for it to be done. In 1525 Denia writes: 'Nothing would do so much good as some pressure (*i.e.*, punishment or torture), although it is a very serious thing for a subject to think of applying such to his Sovereign. Perhaps it will be best to try what effect a good priest would have upon Her Highness . . . a Dominican would be best, as she does not like Franciscans.' On another occasion soon afterwards, when Charles had decided to have his mother secretly carried by night to the impregnable castle of Toro, not far from Tordesillas, Denia remarks that he had taken measures that no persons should be in the streets to witness her arrival, 'for, in good truth, I myself am ashamed of what I hear and see.'

And so from year to year the Queen's religious aberrations consigned her to constantly increased seclusion to avoid scandal. The Emperor and his only son Philip visited the Queen at least on one occasion at Tordesillas, and during the regency of Philip in 1552, whilst Charles was in Germany, the Prince, much more rigidly devout even than his father, and shocked at the continued refusal of his grandmother to attend the services of the Church and fulfil her religious duties, sent to Tordesillas the saintly Jesuit Francis of Borgia, Duke of Gandia, to exert his influence upon the Queen. His success was very small. For weeks Joan refused to conform, until, at last Borgia persuaded her to make what is called a 'general confession,' and he thereupon gave her absolution;[1]

[1] Denia's account of the interview with Borgia (confirmed by the latter) is extremely curious. The priestly Duke said, as she would do nothing else, she might recite the 'General Confession,' and he would absolve her. 'Can you absolve?' she asked. 'Yes!' he replied, 'with the exception of certain cases.' 'Then,' said the Queen, 'you recite the General Confes-

but directly he left she relapsed into her former indifference again.

When Philip was leaving Spain to marry Mary, Queen of England, in 1554, he sent Father Borgia again to try to bring Joan to her religious duties. She heard the good father patiently, and when he had finished his exhortations, she endeavoured to make terms. Yes, she would hear mass, and confess, and receive absolution, and the rest of it, if the women attendants upon her were sent away, as they always mocked her whilst she was at her devotions. 'If that be so,' replied Father Borgia, 'the Inquisition shall deal with them as heretics;' and he at once wrote to Philip recommending that they should pretend to hand the women over to the Holy Office, place crosses and images of saints about the Queen's rooms, say daily mass on the corridor altar, and if the Queen objected, tell her that it was done by the order of the Inquisition. He also proposed to bring some priestly exorcisers to cast out the devils that afflicted the Queen; but this Philip would not allow. The effect of Borgia's efforts on this occasion was, that when Prince Philip on his way to Corunna to sail for England called at Tordesillas, he found Joan to his delight going through the ordinary religious rites without resistance. But her devotion was clearly only on the surface, and her new confessor Friar Luis de la Cruz, soon reported that he dared not expose himself to the peril of committing a

sion.' This Borgia did, and asked her whether she said the same. 'Yes,' she replied; and 'she then permitted him to absolve her.' It will be seen that there was not much submission in this. Only a day or so afterwards she appears to have flown into a terrible passion because some new hangings and gold ornaments had been placed on the corridor altar; and she refused to eat until they had been removed, and the altar left plain as before.

grave act of sacrilege by administering the sacraments to the Queen, and resigned his office. It appears, amongst other things, that she always shut her eyes at the elevation of the Host at the mass, and on one occasion she violently told her attendants to throw away the blessed tapers they carried before her, as she said they stank.

Since the summer of 1553, Joan, then an old woman, had suffered from swelling of the lower limbs, which almost crippled her; and in February 1555, after a bath of very hot water, the legs broke out into open wounds. Thenceforward the course of her illness presented an extraordinary resemblance to that which proved mortal in the case of her grandson, Philip II. Dreadful gangrenous sores, which she refused to have dressed or washed, caused her the most awful torment. She paid no heed to the directions of doctors or nurses; and when her granddaughter, the Infanta Joan, came over from Valladolid with the best medical men procurable, the Queen violently refused to see them or allow them to examine her. Thus, lying in repulsive squalor and filth, the poor creature was told that Father Borgia had come to see her. She angrily refused to listen to him at first, but she was weak, and his persistence seems finally to have conquered. By and bye she admitted that she was sorry for her errors, and deplored the divagations of her spirit. At the request of Borgia she repeated the apostle's creed and confessed; but just as he was about to administer the *viaticum*, she expressed some scruple at receiving it. Learned theologians were summoned in haste from Salamanca; and a few days afterwards, on the 11th April 1555, the famous Dr Soto was closeted with her for hours. His report was that, though she had privately told him

things that consoled him, the Queen was not fit to receive the Eucharist; though extreme unction might be administered.

That same night the last rites were performed. Leaning over the dying woman with a crucifix, the priest told her that the last hour for her was come, and that it behoved her to ask God for pardon. By signs and gestures of grief and contrition, she expressed what her poor palsied tongue refused to utter; and Father Borgia, believing her beyond speech, asked her to signify whether he should recite the creed for her. To the astonishment of every one she suddenly recovered her power of utterance, and replied, 'You begin it, and I will repeat it after you.' When the last amen was said, the saintly Jesuit placed a crucifix to the lips of the dying woman. 'Christ crucified aid me,' she had strength yet to say, and then Joan the Mad passed to the land where all are sane. For twenty years her body lay in the Convent of St. Clara, opposite her prison palace; upon the same spot where the coffin of her husband had rested for so many years; and then, in 1574, she was carried at last to the sumptuous tomb at Granada, to join for the rest of time the dust of him that she had loved not wisely but too well.

The foregoing account of the life of this most unfortunate of queens, gathered entirely from the contemporary statements of persons who knew her, tends irresistibly to the conclusion that her early rigid training, followed by her life in Flanders, had implanted in her mind a dislike of the stern bigotry which characterised the religion of Spain under the influence of the Inquisition; and that this dislike grew to hatred when her mind became permanently unsettled. Her strict seclusion and cruel treatment do not appear to have

been so necessary for her own health, or even primarily for the public welfare, as for the interests of her father and son, whose autocratic power was threatened by any combination of nobles acting in her name, and whose policy largely depended upon the maintenance of strict religious orthodoxy. To leave at liberty and accessible a feeble-minded Queen who desired to govern through the nobles, and hated the religion of the Inquisition, would have been to invite disaster to the very basis upon which the vast edifice of Spanish autocratic power at its grandest was erected. It might have been better for Spain in the long run, but it would have been ruin for Ferdinand and Charles; and to their interests successively Joan the Mad was sacrificed.

BOOK III

I

MARY TUDOR

QUEEN OF ENGLAND AND SPAIN

BOOK III

In the noble gallery at the Prado there hangs the full-length seated portrait of a lady of peculiarly modern aspect, painted by Titian from sketches and descriptions in his extreme old age.[1] Her sad, sweet smile, vague, lymphatic eyes, and high prominent forehead, give to the face a character of far-away ideality, such as marked so many of the members of her house: for this is Isabel, the consort of the Emperor, and she, like the greater Isabel's mother, belonged to the fated royal family of Portugal, whose tainted blood so often carried to its possessors the mysticism that degenerates into madness. Throughout the poor lady's life of barely thirty-six years, she was overshadowed by the tremendous responsibility of being the mother of the Cæsar's children. During the long and frequent absences from Spain of Charles v. in his life-struggle against France and heresy on the one side, and the powers of Islam on the other, the Empress Isabel, as Regent, controlled by a council mainly of churchmen, had to squeeze funds for the imperial wars from the commons of Castile, well nigh crushed into financial impotence since the defeat of the parliamentary champions at Villalar.

Like all those who came into immediate contact with Charles in his imperial capacity, his wife was humbly subordinate to the overwhelming magnitude of the

[1] For particulars of this portrait, hitherto unknown, see 'Calendars of Spanish State Papers,' vol. viii., edited by Martin Hume.

policy which he directed, and she had no share in moulding events. For her the glory was sufficient to have borne her husband a son who lived, besides daughters and two boys who died of epilepsy in infancy. The mother of Philip of Spain looked with reverential awe upon her own child, so great and important to mankind was held to be the inheritance to which he was to succeed; and when she flickered out of life in 1539, the boy of twelve was her main contribution and justification to a world which had only known her as Cæsar's wife, and only remembered her as Philip's mother.

In the atmosphere of hushed reverence and rigid sacrifice to imperial ends that filled the monastic court of Spain in the absence of the Emperor, Philip was never allowed to forget for an hour the destiny, with all its duties, its responsibilities, and its power, for which he was taught that God had specially selected him as son of his father. As a boy regent in the Emperor's first great trial of strength with the German Lutherans, his heart had ached at the sufferings of Spain from the cruel drain of blood and treasure for the war in which she had no direct concern; but when he dared, almost passionately, to remonstrate with his father at the ruin which he himself was forced to impose upon the people he loved, he was coldly reminded that it was the cause of God that he and his were fighting, and all earthly considerations must be sacrificed for its triumph. Philip was the son of his forbears, and he learnt his lesson well. Like his grandmother Isabel, he had no love of cruelty for its own sake, but like her he held the mystic belief that he and the Most High were linked in community of cause, and that the greater the suffering the greater the glory. He never spared himself or others when the cause for which he lived,

the unification of the faith, demanded sacrifice; but fate was cruel in the era she chose for him. The age when Charles and his son were pledged to force all men to take their faith unquestioned from Rome at the tips of Spanish pikes was that in which the rebellious Monk of Wittemburg had challenged Rome itself, and the world was throbbing with the new revelation, that beyond the trappings that man had hung upon the church, there was a God to whom all were equal, and to whom all might appeal direct.

So, throughout the century of strife, both Charles and his son, rigid as they were, were always obliged to conciliate England, whatever its faith might be; for France, and heresy in their own dominions, were ever the nearest enemies; and for England permanently to have thrown in its lot with either of them would have consigned Spain to impotence. Henry VIII. might defy the Pope, despoil the Church, and insultingly repudiate his blameless Spanish wife, but the Emperor dared not quarrel with him for long together, or provoke him too far. But, withal, it was a hard trial for the champion of orthodoxy to have to speak fair and softly to his heterodox, excommunicated uncle, and welcome alliance with the power that was a standing negation of the cause for which he lived. Still harder was it when Henry was dead; for his personal prestige was great, and his professions of orthodoxy were emphatic, apart from his personal quarrel with the Papacy. But to him there succeeded a child-king ruled by men of small ability, determined to alter the faith of England itself, and make a durable friendship with Spain impossible.

Then almost suddenly the whole aspect of affairs changed. It had been known for some time that the

young King of England, Edward VI., was failing, and would probably die without issue; but the uncertain element had been the extent of the Duke of Northumberland's power and the strength of English Protestantism. Edward VI. died on the 7th July 1553, and the undignified collapse of Northumberland at once decided the Emperor's plans. The treachery of Maurice of Saxony had brought Charles to the humiliating peace of Passau, and had made for ever impossible the realisation of the great dream of making Philip Emperor as well as King. It was the heaviest blow that Charles had ever suffered; and, if he could have appreciated its significance, he would have seen that it proved the impossibility of the task he had undertaken. He was still at war with the enemy, France, who had supported his Lutheran princes, and he was burning to avenge the crowning disaster of Metz, when the death of the boy King of England opened to his mind's eye the gates of a shining future. The hollow crown of the Empire might go, with its poor patrimony and its turbulent Lutheran subjects, the fat Portuguese dowry he coveted for his son Philip might be cheerfully sacrificed; but if only rich England could be joined in lasting bonds to Spain, then France would indeed be in the toils, Flanders and Italy safe, the road to unlimited expansion in the East open, and Spain, supreme, might give laws to Latin Christendom, and to heathendom beyond. The prize was worth bidding for, and Charles lost no time.

In the brilliant summer weather of late July in 1553, a faded little woman with a white pinched face, no eyebrows, and russet hair, rode in a blaze of triumph through the green-bordered roads of Suffolk and Essex

towards London. Around her thronged a thousand gentlemen in velvet doublets and gold chains, whilst a great force of armed men followed to support if need be the right of Mary Queen of England. It was not much more than a fortnight since her brother had died, but into that time the poignant emotions of a century had been crammed. The traitors who had proclaimed Queen Jane had tumbled over each other to be the first to betray some of their companions, and all to disown the despotic craven who had led them, the wretched Northumberland; Protestant London, even, had greeted with frantic joy the name of the Catholic Queen, whose right it knew, and whose unmerited sufferings it pitied; but at thirty-seven, an old maid, disillusioned and wearied by years of cruel injustice, Mary Tudor came to her heritage resigned rather than elated.

Amongst the crowds of officials and gentlemen who rode out of London to pay homage to the new Queen, were two men, each pledged to outwit the other in his quest. They were of similar age, about fifty, both Frenchmen, though one was born in the Burgundian territory of the Franche Comté, and both were ambassadors; one, Simon Renard, representing the Emperor, and the other, Antoine de Noailles, the King of France, and they went racing towards Chelmsford, each to try to win Queen Mary to the side of his master. Noailles was the more courtly and aristocratic; and his insinuating grace made him a dangerous rival, for it hid a spirit that stopped at no falsity or treachery if it would serve his turn. But in gaining Mary Tudor he was fatally handicapped, though when she received him at New Hall she spoke so fairly that he thought he had succeeded.[1] For Simon Renard represented

[1] Ambassades de Noailles, vol. ii. p. 99.

the power that throughout all the bitter trials of her life Mary had looked to as her only friend. Again and again the imperial ambassadors alone had dared to claim better treatment for her and her outraged mother; and had threatened her father with vengeance if ill befell her; whilst France had always taken the opposite side, and egged King Henry on to work his own will in despite of Spain and the empire. So, though Mary was diplomatic to Noailles she was friendly to Renard, for to him and his master she looked to keep secure her trembling throne.

Already it was seen that the Queen must marry. She had been betrothed times out of number as an instrument of policy, but of her own will she desired no husband; and when Renard, in a long private chat with her at New Hall on the 1st August, broached the subject, she told him that she knew her duty in that respect and would do it, but prayed for the guidance of the Emperor in her choice of a husband. She was no longer young, she said, and hoped that too youthful a husband would not be recommended to her. Renard knew that already English people had chosen as the Queen's prospective bridegroom young Courtenay, still in the Tower as a prisoner; and that failing him, some had thought of Cardinal Pole; but he knew well, as did the Emperor, that Mary was too proud to marry a subject, and looked to her marriage as a means of strengthening her throne; and soon afterwards even Noailles saw that Courtenay had spoilt his chance by dissoluteness of life, though he continued to make use of him as a tool for conspiracy against Mary and her Spanish friends.

On the 3rd August the new Queen, dressed in violet velvet, and mounted on a milk-white pony, came to her

city of London through the gaily decked portal of Aldgate, and so to the Tower, where she released those who had lain there in prison to suit the policy of the men who had ruled Edward VI. Events moved apace. Gardiner from a prison was suddenly raised to the post of chief minister. Bonner, the hated Bishop of London, came from the Marshalsea to his throne in Saint Paul's; and everywhere, though yet illegal, the mass was already being introduced. The Emperor kept warning Mary to be moderate, and to walk warily; whilst the churchmen, burning with zeal to come upon their own again, were obstinately shutting their eyes to all that had happened since bluff Henry's death. Renard it was who almost daily saw the Queen with these messages of modern counsel from his master; and the subject of marriage was mentioned more than once. Noailles and Gardiner were pushing as hard as they might the suit of Courtenay; but on the 7th August Mary told Renard that she saw no fit match for her in her own country, and had decided to marry a foreigner.

Then gently and tentatively the ambassador mentioned the Emperor's only son Philip. She affected to laugh at the idea, for the Prince was only twenty-seven —the same age as Courtenay, by the way—and, as she said on another occasion, most of the bridegrooms they offered her might have been her sons. But Renard saw that his suggestion was not altogether an unwelcome one, and hastened to ask his master for further instructions. 'Do not overpress her,' wrote Granvelle, 'to divert her from any other match; because if she have the whim she will carry it forward if she be like other women.' But Mary Tudor's birth and trials had made her not like other women; and she listened to the tale of marriage, not because she hank-

ered for a husband, but because she hungered for a son to present to her people.

Noailles soon got wind of the plan to marry Mary to the Emperor's son, and wherever French gold or interest could reach the enemies of the new regime they were plied with hints of the terrible results that would come if Spain ruled England by Torquemada's methods. A gust of panic swept over London at the idea of an Inquisition; for the Queen had come at first with promises of toleration, and already the zeal of the churchmen had darkened the horizon. On the eve of the Queen's coronation, on the 1st October, a Spanish resident in London, whilst professing to despair of the probability of the match, writes words that show how well aware even private citizens were of the advantage that it would bring to Spain. 'And if the Lord vouchsafed us to behold this glorious day, what great advantage would befall our Spain, by holding the Frenchmen in check, by the union of these kingdoms with his Majesty. And if it were only to preserve Flanders his Majesty and his son must greatly desire it, . . . for when the Lord shall call his Majesty away the Low Countries will be in peril of the Frenchmen attacking them, or of the Germans (*i.e.*, Lutherans) invading them by their help, the succour from Spain being so remote, and the people (*i.e.*, of Flanders) not being well affected towards our nation. It would also be most advantageous to Spain, because if aught should happen to the Prince's son (*i.e.*, Don Carlos) the son born here would be King of both countries, and, in sooth, this would be advantageous to the English also.' [1]

[1] Antonio de Guaras to the Duke of Alburquerque. 'Antonio de Guaras,' by Dr R. Garnett. For particulars of this personage, Antonio de Guaras, see 'Españoles é Ingleses,' por Martin Hume. Madrid y Londres, 1903.

We may be sure that Mary's coyly sympathetic attitude was not lost on the Emperor. But Philip was a man of twenty-seven, a widower since his boyhood, with a mistress (Isabel de Osorio) whom he loved; and for many years past he had been his own master, and practically King of Spain, though nominally only Prince Regent. His marriage, moreover, to a Portuguese cousin with a rich dowry was in active final negotiation, and the Emperor could not be sure how the Prince would receive the suggestion of marriage with an unattractive foreign woman more than ten years his senior, and living in a far country. He need have had no distrust. Philip under his system had been brought up from his birth to regard sacrifice to his mission as a supreme duty. He was a statesman and a patriot, and he saw as clearly as his father the increment of strength that the union with England would bring to the cause to which their lives were pledged; and his reply, given, as Sandoval says, 'like a second Isaac ready to sacrifice himself to his father's will and for the good of the church,' was, 'I have no other will than that of your Majesty, and whatever you desire, that will I do.'

Promptly on the heels of the courier that bore the dutiful letter to the Emperor went two nobles of Philip's household, Don Diego Hurtado de Mendoza and Don Diego de Geneda, to offer congratulations and greetings to the new Queen of England in his name. Geneda bore a secret message to her of a warmer character than mere greeting; and before the sumptuous coronation in Westminster Abbey on the 1st October, Mary had practically made up her mind to marry her second cousin. She knew that England, under Noailles' artful incitement, was in a ferment of alarm at the idea; but she was a Tudor; she had some

long scores to settle, she needed strength to do it, and opposition only made her firmer. Parliament met on the 5th October, and, under pressure from Mary, made a clean sweep of all the anti-Papal laws that had severed England from Rome; but when, influenced by Gardiner and prompted by Noailles, the House of Commons voted an address to the Queen praying her not to marry a foreigner, Mary sent for the members to wait upon her. The Speaker and a deputation of twenty parliament men stood trembling before her and presented their humble address, whilst the angry Queen muttered that she would be a match for Chancellor Gardiner's cunning. Her reply to the Speaker was haughty and minatory: 'Your desire to dictate to us the Consort whom we shall choose we consider somewhat superfluous. The English parliament has not been wont to use such language to its sovereigns, and when private persons on such matters suit their own tastes, sovereigns may reasonably be allowed to choose whom they prefer.' [1] This was the true Tudor way of dealing with the Commons, and Mary having obtained the religious legislation she needed to legalise her own position on the throne, promptly dissolved the parliament she had flouted.

It was only after much prayerful heart-searching that Mary had so far made up her mind to prefer the Prince of Spain. At first she had tried to make it a condition that the Emperor should not ask her to marry any candidate before she had seen him; but this in Philip's case was impossible. He was too great a catch to be trotted out for inspection and approval, and when this was gently put to her by Renard, she tearfully implored the ambassador, whose hands she seized and

[1] Correspondance de Cardinal de Granvelle.

held between her own, not to deceive her with regard to the Prince's character. Was he really well conducted and discreet, as he had been described to her? The ambassador emphatically protested on his honour that he was; but still the Queen, almost doubting still, wished that she might see him before she gave her word. A good portrait by Titian was sent to her, representing the Prince rather younger than he was, a good-looking young man with the fair Austrian skin and yellow hair, the slight curly beard hardly masking the heavy jaw and underlip he inherited from his father. The portrait appears to have banished the last doubts in Mary's mind. She had never had a love affair before, often as she had been betrothed: even now her idea had been to marry because her position entailed it. But the contemplation of the face of him who was to be her husband, and Renard's reiteration of his good qualities, gradually worked in her mind an intense yearning for the affection for which she had hungered in vain during her persecuted youth.

On Sunday evening, the 31st October, she summoned Renard to a room containing an altar upon which the monstrance with the Host was placed. The Queen was alone, except for her devoted nurse Mrs Clarencius, when the ambassador entered; and with much emotion she told him that since he had presented the Emperor's letter asking her hand for Philip, she had been sleepless, passing her time in weeping and prayers for guidance as to her choice of a husband. 'The Holy Sacrament is my resource in all my difficulties,' she said, 'and as it is standing upon the altar in this room, I will appeal to it for counsel now;' and, kneeling, as did Renard and Clarencius, she recited *Veni Creator*

Spiritus almost below her breath. After a short silent prayer she rose, calm and self-possessed, and told the ambassador that she had chosen him for her father confessor with the Emperor. She had considered carefully all that had been told her about Philip, and had consulted Arundel, Paget, and Petre [1] on the subject; and, bearing in mind the good qualities and disposition of the Prince, she prayed the Emperor to be indulgent with her, and agree to the conditions necessary for the welfare of her realm; to continue to be a good father to her, since henceforward he would be doubly her father, and to urge Philip to be a good husband. Then solemnly upon the altar, before the Sacred Presence, she promised Renard that she would marry Philip, Prince of Spain, making him a good and faithful wife, loving him devotedly without change.[2] She had wavered long in doubt, she said, but God had illumined her, and her mind was now made up: she would marry Philip and no one else.

Renard was overjoyed at the news, which he sent flying to the Emperor, but kept inviolably secret from all others. But though no one knew, every one suspected; and the muttering of coming trouble sounded on all sides. Lady Jane Grey, Northumberland's three sons, Cranmer, Ridley, and others, were tried and condemned to death. Risings here and there in the country burst out sporadically, for disaffection was everywhere; Noailles' confabulations with Elizabeth and Courtnay were discovered and denounced; Pole was stopped by the Emperor on his way to England; and Gardiner, kept in the dark as to the Queen's irre-

[1] These were all councillors in the interest and pay of the Emperor, and were pledged in any case to favour the match.

[2] Record Office. Record Commission Transcripts, Brussels, vol. i.

vocable promise, still battled against the project of a Spanish match. But the secret had to be let out at last, and the Spanish adherents in Mary's council were obliged to consult Gardiner as to the marriage treaty. They drove a hard bargain, notwithstanding all the bribes and blandishments, for they were determined that the marriage should not mean the political subjugation of England by Spain; and the King Consort's power was so fenced around by safeguards and limitations that when Philip finally heard the conditions, he was well nigh in despair, for he knew that if they were fulfilled to the letter the marriage would be useless to Spanish interests, and that his sacrifice would be in vain. But of this the populace knew nothing. What they did know was, that a Spaniard was coming to be their King, and London at least shuddered at the plenteous hints that Noailles had spread, that the Inquisition and the *auto de fe* were coming too.

So when, on the 1st January 1554, a troop of foreign servants and harbingers rode through the city of London to prepare the lodgings of the brilliant imperial embassy that was to arrive next day, even the 'prentices gathered as they passed and greeted them with curses and volleys of snowballs.[1] The brilliant Count of Egmont and his train landed duly at the Tower wharf on the morrow, to ask formally for the hand of the Queen for the Emperor's son. 'They were met by Sir Anthony Browne, he being clothed in a very gorgeouse apparell. At the Tower Hill the earle of Devonshire (*i.e.*, Courtenay), with the lorde Garrett and dyvers others, receyved him in most honorable and famylier wyse; and so the lorde of Devonshire, gevyng him the right hand,

[1] Chronicle of Queen Jane and Queen Mary. Camden Society.

brought him thoroughte Chepsyde, and so fourthe to Dyrram Place (*i.e.*, Durham House in the Strand), the people nothing rejoysing, helde downe their heddes sorowfully.'[1] The formalities were soon got through with a few solemn banquets and courtly ceremonies, and on the 13th January Gardiner, with as good a face as he could put upon the matter, made an oration in the Chamber of Presence at Westminster to the lords and officials, declaring the Queen's purpose to marry Philip of Spain: 'in most godly lawfull matrimonye: and further, that she should have for her joynter xxx.^{mil} ducketes by the yere, with all the Lowe Country of Flanders; and that the issue betweene them two lawfully begotten shoulde, yf there were any, be heir as well to the Kingdome of Spayne, as also to the sayde Lowe Country. He declared further that we were much bounden to thanck God that so noble, worthye, and famouse a prince, would vouchsaff so to humble himself in this maryadge to take upon him rather as a subject than otherwise: and that the Quene should rule all thinges as nowe: and that there should be of the Counsell no Spanyard, nether should have the custody of any fortes or castells, nether have rule or offyce in the quene's house or elsewhere in all England.'[2] Gardiner made the best of it, but the bare fact was enough to send the friends of the late regime, and not a few of those who had profited by the plunder of the

[1] Chronicle of Queen Jane and Queen Mary. Camden Society.

[2] On the 21st January 1554 the Emperor wrote to Philip sending him the treaty for ratification, and asked him to send powers for the formal betrothal, since the English insist that when, by the blessing of God, the marriage takes place you shall take an oath to respect the laws and privileges of England: '*but the Queen confidently assures us that secretly everything shall be done to our liking, and we believe this.*' MSS. Simancas. Estado, 808.

church, into a delirium of fear. Carews, Wyatts, and Greys protested, rebelled and collapsed, for England, in the main, was loyal to Mary, and the vast majority of the people, except in and about London, bitterly resented the iconoclastic changes of Edward's reign. The Queen knew her own mind too, and in the face of danger was as firm as a rock, for in her sight the Spanish marriage meant the resurrection of her country and the salvation of her people. Charles and his son doubtless thought so too in a general way, but that was not their first object. What they wanted was to humble France permanently by means of their command of English resources, and to make Spain the dictatress of the world.

On the very day that poor Wyatt's 'draggletayles,' all mud-stained and weary with their march from Kingston Bridge, were toiling up Fleet Street to final failure and the gallows, a dusty courier rode into Valladolid with the news for Philip, that the offer of his hand had been accepted by the Queen of England. The prince was at Aranjuez, a hundred miles away, planning his favourite gardens, when the news reached him, with the premature addition that the Earl of Bedford was already on the way to Spain with the marriage contract. Philip stopped his pastime at once and started the same day for Valladolid with his bodyguard of horsemen in the scarlet and gold of Aragon. In haste the old city put itself into holiday garb, and organised tourneys, cane-tiltings and fireworks, to celebrate the agreement which was to make the beloved Prince of Spain King of England. The looms and broidery-frames of all the realms were soon busy making the gorgeous garb and glittering trappings to fit out the nobles and hidalgos who were

to follow their prince to England, each, with Spanish ostentation, bent upon outstripping his fellows in splendour. Alba, Medina Celi, Aguilar, Pescara, Feria, Mendoza and Enriquez, and a hundred other haughty magnates, were bidden to make ready with their armies of retainers all in fine new clothes, in spite of Renard's warning that: '*Seulement sera requis que les Espaignolez qui suyuront vostre Alteze comportent les façons de faire des Angloys, et soient modestes.*'

Philip's steward, Padilla, was sent hurrying to the coast to receive the Earl of Bedford, who did not start from England for another month; and the Marquis de las Novas, loaded with splendid presents from Philip to his bride, set out for England. Mary was conspicuously fond of fine garments and jewels, and Philip in his youth, and on state occasions, wore the richest of apparel; but even they must have been sated at the piled-up sumptuousness for which their wedding was an excuse. Philip's offering to Mary, sent by Las Novas, consisted of 'a great table diamond, mounted as a rose in a superb gold setting, valued at 50,000 ducats; a collar or necklace of eighteen large brilliants, exquisitely mounted and set with dainty grace, valued at 32,000 ducats; a great diamond and a large pearl pendant from it (this was Mary's favourite jewel, and may be seen in the accompanying portrait), the most beautiful gems, says a contemporary eyewitness, ever seen in the world, and worth 25,000 ducats; and then follows a list of pearls, diamonds, emeralds and rubies, without number, sent to Mary and her ladies by the gallant bridegroom.[1]

[1] 'The Coming of Philip the Prudent' in 'The Year after the Armada,' by Martin Hume.

Whilst all these fine preparations were going on in Spain, the Emperor more than once questioned the wisdom or safety of allowing his son to risk himself amongst a people so incensed against the match as the English, and in partial rebellion against it; and Renard held many anxious conferences with Mary and her council on the subject. The Queen declared again and again that she would answer for Philip's safety; and she put aside, as gently as she could, Renard's incessant promptings of greater severity upon Elizabeth, Courtenay and the rest of the suspects and rebels. Once, at the end of March, Renard told her that if she was so lenient to rebels, he doubted whether Prince Philip could be trusted in her realm, 'as he could not come armed; and if anything befell him it would be a most disastrous and lamentable scandal. Not only would the person of his Highness suffer, but also the lords and gentlemen who accompanied him: and I could not help doubting whether she had taken all the necessary steps to ensure safety.' To this she answered, with tears in her eyes, 'that she had rather never been born than that any outrage should happen to the Prince; and she fervently hoped to God that no such thing would occur. All the members of her Council would do their duty in their reception of the Prince, and were going to great expense about it. Her Council shall be reduced to six members, as Paget and Petre had advised; and she would do her best to dispose the goodwill of her subjects who wish for the Prince's coming.'[1]

Mary was overwhelmed with anxiety. 'She had

[1] Renard to the Emperor, 27th March 1554. Record Commission Transcripts, also printed by Tytler.

neither rest nor sleep,' she said, 'for thinking of the means of security for Philip in England.' But she would not sacrifice Elizabeth for all the clamouring of Renard, and even of Gardiner. She knew that the French were almost openly subsidising rebellion against her; and that her people grew more apprehensive daily that her marriage with Philip would mean a war with France for Spanish objects, but she had now set her mind upon the marriage, and nothing in the world would shake her. Philip, though he was not personally brave, was equally firm about coming, even at risk of his life; for his was a spirit of sacrifice and his marriage was a sacred duty. From duty Philip never shrank, whatever the suffering it entailed.

On the 14th May 1554 Philip rode out of Valladolid with nearly a thousand horsemen in gaudy raiment. First going south west to near the Portuguese frontier to meet his sister Joan, who had just lost her husband, the Prince of Portgual, he turned aside to take a last farewell to his grandmother, Joan the Mad, in her prison-palace at Tordesillas, and then passed on from town to town, through Leon and Galicia; his puny, hydrocephalic heir, Don Carlos, by his side, towards Santiago and Corunna. Loving greeting and good wishes followed him everywhere; for was he not going to fix upon yet another land, and that a rich one, the seal that marked it as within the circle of the Spanish realms? Proud were these hidalgos who rode behind him, proud the Spaniards, high and low, who welcomed him and sped him on his way, proud the very lackeys in the smallest squireling's train; for they were all Spaniards, and they felt that this was a Spanish victory.

On the vigil of St. John, 23rd June, Philip was

received at the gates of Santiago by kneeling citizens with golden keys as usual; and as he and his train, all flashing in the southern sun, pranced through the streets of the apostolic capital, two English lords, Bedford and Fitzwalter, sat at a window with their mantles before their faces, watching the progress of their future King. The next morning the English special envoys were publicly led into Philip's presence. He met them at the door of the chamber leading into the great hall, and as the Englishmen bent the knee and doffed their bonnets the Prince uncovered and bowed low. Bedford, 'a grandee and a good Christian,' we are told by an eyewitness, then handed the marriage contract to him, and kissed hand, as did his colleagues. On leaving the room one Englishman said to another, apparently delighted at Philip's demeanour, 'O! God be praised for sending us so good a King as this'; and the Spaniard who heard the remark and understood English was only too glad of an opportunity of repeating it to his gratified compatriots. The envoys had good reason to be pleased with Philip, for though he was usually a bad paymaster to those who served him, he could be very liberal when it suited him; and on the day after the state interview a splendid piece of gold plate, magnificently worked, and standing nearly five feet high, was presented to Bedford, all the rest of the Englishmen being dealt with in similar generous fashion.

In the harbour a fine fleet of vessels rode at anchor with several English royal vessels; and Bedford prayed that Philip would make the voyage in one of the latter. This, however, was not considered prudent or dignified; but the English envoys were given the privilege of choosing amongst the Spanish vessels

that which should carry the King. It was a fine ship they selected, belonging to Martin de Bertondona, one of the first sailors in Spain ; and when Philip went to inspect it the next day it must have presented a splendid sight, with its towering gilded poop and forecastle, its thousand fluttering pennons ; and over all the proud royal standard of crimson damask thirty yards long.[1] At length, after much ceremonious junketing, the heralds announced that the King would embark the next day, 12th July. There were over a hundred sail, fully armed and carrying a body of over six thousand men to reinforce the Emperor, besides six thousand sailors ; and when the King stepped upon his beautiful twenty-four-oared galley, all decked with silk and cloth of gold, with minstrels and rowers clad in damask doublets and plumed bonnets to go on board the ship that was to bear him to England, the 'Espiritu Santo,' the great crowd on shore cried aloud to God and Santiago to send the royal traveller a safe and happy voyage, and confusion to the French. On the fifth day out a Flemish fleet of eighteen sail hove in sight off the Land's End, and convoyed the Prince past the Needles with some ships of the English navy ; and on Thursday, 19th July 1554, the combined fleets anchored in Southampton Water amidst the thunderous salutes of the English and Flemish ships at anchor there to greet them.

The English and Flemish sailors had not got on well together during the stay of the Flemish fleet at Southampton. The officers suspected the Lord Admiral of England (Lord William Howard) of in-

[1] Full details of Philip's voyage and arrival in England will be found in 'The Coming of Philip the Prudent' in 'The Year after the Armada,' by Martin Hume.

triguing with the French to capture Philip on his way; and reported that he made little account of the Flemish Admiral, de la Chapelle, and called his ships mussel shells. When some of the Flemings had landed the English soldiers had hustled and insulted them in the streets; and by the time Philip arrived in Southampton water the two naval forces were not on speaking terms.[1] On shore things were no better. The nobility of England, usually so lavish, except those around the Queen, were for the most part sulking as much as they dared. They were too poor, they declared, to make great and costly preparations to receive the King, and even a majority of the Queen's Council were suspected of plotting in favour of Elizabeth; whilst Noailles was tireless in his efforts to spread alarm and disaffection.

Bedford had reported that Philip was a bad sailor, but fortunately the voyage had been a calm one, and he remained at anchor for twenty hours before he landed for the first time in England; so that he was quite able to carry out the instructions of his father, and the recommendations of Renard, to conciliate the English in every possible way. During his visit years before to Germany and Flanders he had offended the subjects there by his cold precision of manner and his Spanish abstemiousness; but from the first hour of his stay in England, his whole behaviour underwent a change, for at the call of duty he was even willing to sacrifice all his usual tastes and habits. A crowd of English nobles and courtiers who were to be Philip's household came off at once to salute him on board the 'Espiritu Santo'; and when the next day he stepped into the magnificent royal barge that was to bear him

[1] Renard to the Emperor, 9th June 1554, Brussels Transcripts, Record Office.

to land, the Earl of Arundel invested him with the badge of the Garter in the name of the Queen. With him, besides the English lords, there went in the barge a stately crowd of Spanish grandees, Alba, Feria, Ruy Gomez, his only friend, Olivares, with Egmont, Horn, and Bergues; but no soldier or man-at-arms was allowed on shore on pain of death. Philip had learnt from Renard the agony of distrust felt in England of Spanish arms, and at the same time came the even less welcome news that the Emperor had suffered a defeat in Flanders, and needed urgently every soldier that could be sent to him. So the Spanish fleet was not even allowed to enter the port of Southampton, but after some delay and much grumbling on the part of the Spaniards at what they considered churlish treatment, was sent to Portsmouth to revictual for their voyage to Flanders.

As Philip stepped ashore, Sir Anthony Browne in a Latin speech announced that the Queen had appointed him her consort's master of the horse, and had sent him the beautiful white charger, housed in crimson velvet and gold, that was champing its bit hard by. The King would have preferred to walk the short distance to the house prepared for him; but Browne and the lords in waiting told him that this was not usual, and the former 'took him up in his arms and placed him in the saddle, then kissing the stirrup, marched bareheaded by the side of his new master to the Church of Holy Rood.' The King must have looked a gracious figure as he passed through the curious crowd smiling and bowing, dapper and erect on his steed, with his short yellow beard and close-cropped yellow head; dressed as he was in black velvet and silver, with massive gold chains and glittering gems on his breast,

around his velvet bonnet, and at his neck and wrists; and every one around him, so far as fine clothes went, was a fit pendant to him. All the English guards, archers, and porters wore the red and yellow of Aragon; and the nobles in attendance, both English and Spanish, were splendid in the extreme; but beneath the silk and jewels beat hearts full of hate. The Spanish servants, 400 of them, who landed, were not allowed by the jealous English to act for their master in any way; and at Philip's public dinner the day before he left Southampton, Alba forcibly asserted his right to hand the napkin to his master; whilst all the lowlier courtiers stood by, idly scoffing and sneering at the clumsy service of their English supplanters.

During the four days of Philip's stay at Southampton, whilst his belongings were being landed, splendid presents and loving messages passed almost hourly to and fro between Mary and her betrothed. Hundreds of gaily clad servitors, with finely houselled horses, diamond rings and gold chains galore, came from the Queen at Winchester, though a continuous pelting rain was falling; and on Monday, 23rd July, the great cavalcade set out from Southampton 3000 strong. To the disgust of the Spaniards the King was surrounded by Englishmen alone; and on the way 600 more English gentlemen in black velvet and gold chains met him, sent by the Queen as an additional bodyguard; followed a few miles further on by another embassy from her of six pages clad in crimson brocade and gold sashes, with six more beautiful horses.[1] The rain never ceased, and soon Philip's felt cloak failed to

[1] 'The Coming of Philip the Prudent,' in 'The Year After the Armada,' by Martin Hume. Philip himself brought 600 Andalusian jennets to improve the English breed of horses.

keep dry his black velvet surcoat and his trunks and doublet of white satin embroidered with gold. So wet was he, indeed, that he had to stay at St. Cross to don another suit just as splendid, consisting of a black velvet surcoat covered with gold bugles, and white velvet doublet and trunks. And so clad he and his train rode to the stately cathedral of Winchester to hear mass; and then to the Dean's house close by, where he was to lodge.

That night at ten o'clock, after he had supped, the Earl of Arundel came and told him that the Queen awaited him at the Bishop's palace on the other side of the Cathedral. Once more he donned a change of garments: this time of white kid covered with gold embroidery; and with a little crowd of English and Spanish nobles, he crossed the narrow lane between the two gardens, and entered that of the Bishop by a door in the wall.[1] A private staircase gave access to the Queen's apartment, and there Philip saw his bride for the first time. The apartment was a long narrow gallery, where Gardiner and several other elderly councillors were assembled; and as Philip entered the Queen was pacing up and down impatiently. She was, as usual, magnificently dressed, with many jewels over her black velvet gown, cut high, with a petticoat of frosted silver. When her eyes lighted on him who was to be her husband, she came rapidly forward, kissing her hand before taking his, whilst he gallantly kissed her upon the mouth, in English fashion.

In her case, at all events, it was love at first sight. The poor woman, starved and hungry for love all her life, betrayed and illtreated by those who should have

[1] Though the palace is a crumbling ruin, the door in the garden wall remains.

shielded her, with a soul driven back upon itself, at last had found in this fair, trim built, young man, ten years her junior, a being whom she could love without reproach and without distrust. He confronted the match in a pure spirit of sacrifice; for to him it meant the victory of the cause for which he and his great father lived. It meant, sooner or later, the crushing of France, the extirpation of heresy, and the hegemony of Spain over Europe; and though Mary was no beauty, Philip was a chivalrous gentleman, and, having decided to offer himself as a sacrifice for the cause, he did so with a good grace. Sitting under the canopy side by side, the lovers chatted amicably; he speaking in Spanish and she in French, though she made some coquettish attempts to teach him English words.

The next day brought fresh changes of gorgeous raiment, this time of purple velvet and gold, and the public reception of Philip by his bride in the great hall. There, under the canopy of state, the betrothed pledged each other in a cup of wine, whilst the Spanish courtiers sneered at everything English, and the Englishmen frowned at the Spaniards. On the day of St. James, the patron saint of Spain (25th July), the ancient cathedral was aglow with brilliant colour. All the pomp that expenditure could command, or fancy devise, was there to honour a wedding which apparently was to decide the fate of the world for centuries. The Queen, we are told, blazed with jewels to an extent that dazzled those who gazed upon her, as she swept up to her seat before the altar, with her long train of cloth of gold over her black velvet gown sparkling with precious stones. Philip wore a similar mantle, covered with gems, over a dress of white satin almost hidden by chains and jewels. Upon a platform erected

in the midst of the nave, Philip and Mary were made man and wife by Bishop Gardiner, who afterwards proclaimed to the assembly that the Emperor had transferred to his son the title of King of Naples.

At the wedding banquet in the bishop's palace that afternoon Mary took precedence of her husband. She sat on the higher throne, and ate off gold plate, whilst Philip was served on silver; and Spaniards scowled at the idea that their prince should be second to any. The solid sumptuousness and abundance of everything struck the Spaniards with amazement, both at the banquet and at the ball and supper which followed. But the richer the country the greater their disappointment. Already they were grumbling that the sacrifice the King had made was vain. Philip, after all, was not to be master in England, and must go to a council to ask permission to do anything with English resources. Nay, said the courtiers, so far from being master, it is he who has to dance as these Englishmen play: he must bend to their prejudices and caprices, not they to his, as was fitting for vassals. The English, on their side, were just as dour under the terrifying predictions of French agents; and as the royal lovers travelled to Basing, and so to Windsor, Richmond and London, matters grew worse and worse.

Philip and Renard did their best to smooth ruffled susceptibilities. All acts of clemency were ostentatiously coupled with Philip's name, and the King surpassed himself in amiability and generosity.[1] Mary, in the meantime, was perfectly infatuated with her young husband, and he was kind and gentle to her, as he

[1] This, I am aware, is contrary to the statements of most English historians, and especially of Mr. Froude. The evidence in favour of my view of the King's attitude is stated in my essay called 'The Coming of Philip the Prudent,' in 'The Year After the Armada' and other historical

was to each of his wives in turn. 'Their Majesties,' writes a Spanish courtier, 'are the happiest couple in the world, and are more in love with each other than I can say. He never leaves her, and on the road is always by her side, lifting her into the saddle and helping her to dismount. He dines with her, publicly sometimes, and they go to mass together on feast days.' Then the same writer continues: 'These English are the most ungrateful people in the world, and hate Spaniards worse than the devil. They rob us, even in the middle of the city, and not a soul of us dares to venture two miles away for fear of molestation. There is no justice for us at all. We are ordered by the King to avoid disputes and put up with everything whilst we are here, and to endure all their attacks in silence. . . . We are told that we must bear everything for his Majesty's sake.'[1]

Spanish nobles were openly insulted in the streets of London, and Spanish priests stoned in the churches: but this was not the worst. What galled most was the growing conviction that all this humiliation was in vain. Instead of a submissive people ready to bow the neck to the new King and his countrymen, the Spaniards found a country where the sovereign's power was strictly circumscribed, and where a foreigner's only hope of domination was by force of arms. 'This marriage will, indeed, have been a failure if the Queen have no children,' wrote one of Philip's chamberlains. 'They told us in Castile that if his Highness became King of England we should be masters of France . . . but instead of that the

essays. Mr. Froude and his predecessors depended too implicitly upon the entirely untrustworthy and biassed accounts sent by Noailles to France, and the similarly inimical Venetian agent's version.

[1] 'The Coming of Philip the Prudent.'

French are stronger than ever, and are doing as they like in Flanders. Kings here have as little power as if they were subjects; the people who really govern are the councillors, who are the King's masters. . . . They say openly that they will not let our King go until they and the Queen think fit, as this country is quite big enough to satisfy any one King.'

But still Philip struggled on, gaining ascendancy over his wife and gradually influencing the councillors by gifts and graciousness.[1] The fifty gallows that had borne as many dead sympathisers of Wyatt were cleared from the streets, and the skulls of the higher offenders were banished from London Bridge, so that the triumphant entry of Philip and Mary into the capital should be marred by no evil reminders; but though London was loyal to Mary, it hated Spaniards more than any city in the realm; and the crowd that hailed the Queen effusively when, on the 18th August, she and her husband went in state from Southwark through the city to Whitehall, listened and believed the wild and foolish rumours that a great army of Spaniards was coming to fetch away the crown of England; that a Spanish friar was to be Archbishop

[1] Ruy Gomez wrote from Richmond, 24th August 1554, to Eraso. 'The King entertains the Queen excellently, and knows very well how to pass over what is not good in her for the sensibility of the flesh. He keeps her so contented that truly the other day, when they were alone together, she almost made love to him, and he answered in the same fashion. As for these gentlemen (*i.e.*, the English councillors), his behaviour towards them is such that they themselves confess that they have never yet had a King in England who so soon won the hearts of all men.' MSS. Simancas Estado, 808. In November 1554 Gonzalo Perez wrote to Vasquez: 'The English are now so civil you would hardly believe it. The kindness and gifts they have received, and are receiving every day, from the King would soften the very stones. The Queen is a saint, and I feel sure that God will help us for her sake.'—MSS. Simancas Estado, 808.

of Canterbury, that English treasure was being sent from the Tower to fill the Emperor's coffers, and much else of the same sort that French agents set afloat; so, withal, there were few who smiled upon the Queen's consort, let him smile as he might upon them. Fair pageants decked the street corners, and far-fetched compliments were recited to the King and Queen by children dressed as angels, for the corporation of London had been warned that there must be no lack of official signs of welcome; but to prove how sensitive and apprehensive both the court and the people were, the story is told of how the Conduit in Gracechurch Street was decked with painted figures of kings, one of whom, Henry VIII., was represented with a bible labelled '*Verbum Dei*' in his hand; whereupon Gardiner, in a towering rage, thinking this quite innocent representation was intended as an insult to the Catholic idea of the Bible, sent for the painter and threatened him with all sorts of punishments.

Philip's patience, however, was gradually breaking down the distrust entertained in him. It was seen that wherever his influence was exerted it was on the side of moderation; though of course it was not understood that this and all his sweetness was only part of the deep plan of the Emperor to obtain for his son full control of English policy. Mary's position at the time was a most difficult one. She was deeply in love with her husband; and she desired fervently the aggrandisement of Spain, which would mean the triumph of Catholicism over heresy and security for her throne; but she was an English Queen, determined if she could to rule for the good of her people, and to bring about peace with France before she was drawn into the war.

When Noailles saw Mary to give his tardy and insincere congratulations on the marriage that he had tried so hard to thwart, she assured him that her friendship with France was unchanged, and Philip immediately afterwards added his assurance that he would maintain intact all the alliances contracted by England, whilst they were for England's good.[1]

After Pole had been made to understand that the full restitution of church property in England must not be pressed, or revolution would result, he was allowed to come to England as legate, and the country formally returned to the pale of the church in November 1554. On the very day that Pole arrived it was officially announced that the Queen was pregnant; and all England, and still more all Spaniards, greeted the great news as a special favour vouchsafed by heaven. To Philip and his father it meant very much; for if a son was born the hold of Spain over England would be complete for generations, at least long enough for the great task of unification of the faith to be effected. Its significance, even in anticipation, was made use of by Philip at once, and during the jubilation to which it gave rise, he caused his spokesman in parliament to propose the sending of an armed English contingent to aid the Emperor in the war against France, and the appointment of himself as Regent of England in case the expected child outlived his mother. The zeal of Bonner and Gardiner, however, spoilt it all. They had already begun their fell work of religious persecution; and the reaction that naturally resulted against Spain compelled the Queen to dissolve parliament in a hurry before Philip's turn was served.

Not only was Philip personally opposed to the per-

[1] Ambassades de Noailles, vol. iii. Leyden, 1763.

secution in England, which he saw would injure his object, but he caused his chaplains openly to denounce from the pulpit the policy pursued by the English bishops. Renard ceaselessly deplored in his letters to the Emperor this over zeal of the English churchman, whose one idea of course was to serve, as they thought, their church, and not Spanish political ends. For six months Philip stood in the breach and dammed the tide of persecution : but his father was growing impatient for his presence in Flanders. The deadly torpor was creeping over him, though he was not yet old, as it had crept over others of his house ; and he had begged for months that his son should come and relieve him of his burden. Philip had waited week after week in the ever deluded hope that Mary's promise of issue would be fulfilled ; but, at last, even the unhappy Queen herself had become incredulous, and her husband could delay his departure no longer. By August 1555 the rogations and intercessions to the Almighty for the safe birth of a prince were ordered to be discontinued, and the splendid plot of the Emperor and Philip to bring England and its resources permanently to their side against France and heresy, was admitted to be a failure.

The conviction that she was to be childless was only gradually forced upon Mary ; for she had prayed and yearned so much for motherhood that she could hardly believe that heaven would abandon her thus. In her mind a son born of her and Philip would have made England, as she said, Catholic and strong for ever ; and as the bitter truth of her barrenness came home to the Queen she sank deeper into gloomy despondency, increased by the knowledge that her beloved husband, polite and considerate though he

was to her, was obliged to leave her, with the tacit understanding that their marriage had failed in its chief object. Mary passionately longed to bring about peace between her husband's country and France. She knew that the revolutionary movement in and about London was being actively fomented by French intrigue; that the crowd of pamphlets and scurrilous publications attacking her and her faith were being paid for with French money; and that unless peace was soon made or the agitation stopped England would be drawn into the war and her throne would be in peril. But her efforts towards peace met with little real aid from the French, for any step that consolidated her position and gave time for Spaniards and Englishmen to settle down under one system would have meant ruin to France; and Mary's Council, and more reluctantly Mary herself, was obliged to turn to the other alternative, and attempt to suppress the organised manifestations of rebellion against her rule.

The burning of heretical and treasonable books, and even of the Edward VI. prayer book, was but a prelude to the burning of bodies, and Renard warned the Emperor that before Philip had been gone six months from England the holocaust would begin. It matters little whether the persecutions were religious or political—the apologists of Mary and Elizabeth respectively strive to prove that their victims in each case were political criminals; and doubtless, according to the letter of the law, they were—but it was clear to Philip and his father, that whatever excuse might be advanced for the burning of Englishmen by Mary's Council, the executions would increase the ill-feeling against Spain, and make English resources less available to them against France. But notwithstanding

this Charles would wait no longer for his son, and peremptorily ordered him to return to Flanders.

Philip accompanied his wife in state through London from Hampton Court to Greenwich [1] for the farewell; and there urged her—as he did her Council—to be moderate in punishment. Mary herself was kindly and gentle; but she was a Tudor Queen, and she lived in an age when the life of the individual was considered as nothing to the safety of the State as constituted. Moreover, counsels of moderation coming from Philip of Spain, the patron of the Inquisition, could hardly have sounded very convincing; though they were sincere in the circumstances, for Philip was a statesman before all things, and persecution in England at the time was contrary to his policy. In any case Philip did his best to keep his hand on the break before saying goodbye to his wife. Mary was in the deepest affliction when she took leave of him on the 29th August 1555, though she struggled to retain her composure before the spectators of the scene. With one close embrace she bade him farewell, and sought solitude in a room of which the window commanded a view of the Thames. So long as the barge that bore him to Gravesend was in sight Mary's tear-dimmed eyes followed it yearningly; whilst Philip, courteously punctilious, continued waving his hand and lifting his plumed cap to her until a turn in the river shut him from her sight.

Renard was right. No sooner had Philip gone than the fires blazed out. Hooper, Rogers, Saunders and Tayor, were burnt a fortnight afterwards; then Ridley

[1] It had been announced and was generally believed that Mary was dead, and the citizens were overjoyed to see her in an open litter with Philip and Pole riding by her side.

and Latimer some weeks later, to be followed in a few months by Cranmer and the host of others less distinguished. Gardiner, Mary's prime minister and only able councillor, died in November, just after the opening of parliament; and then, with Pole, practically a foreign ecclesiastic, as her only guide, with a divided Council, and herself in utter despondency, Mary sank deeper and deeper into impotence. Philip had ordered before he left that minutes of all the Council meetings should be sent to him, but he soon found it difficult to control, for his own ends, the action of ministers far away; and when soon afterwards he began to press for English ships to fight the French at sea, he found the Queen's Council tardy and unwilling. The ships, they said, were not ready; but as soon as possible some would be sent to guard the Channel. This did not suit Philip. The ships must be instantly fitted out and commissioned; not at Dover, as the Council had promised, but at Portsmouth, to guard the Emperor's passage to Spain. This, of course, was the thin end of the wedge; what he really needed—and it was now the only benefit he could hope for from his marriage—was that an English fleet should be at his disposal to attack France. The coolness of the English Council and the continued refusal to accede to Mary's request and give him the crown matrimonial of England, soon changed Philip's attitude, and the suavity that had so remarkably characterised him in England gave way to his usual dry *hauteur* towards Englishmen whom he met in Brussels.

He had found his father in the last stage of mental and bodily depression. All had gone ill with him; and the burden of his task, as far from fulfilment as ever, was greater than he could any longer bear.

'Fortune,' he said, 'is a strumpet, and reserves her favours for the young;' and so to the young Philip he had determined to transmit his mighty mission of Christian unification as a means of Spanish predominance. In October 1555, in perhaps the most dramatic scene in history, the Emperor solemnly handed to Philip the sovereignty of Flanders; and on the 16th January 1556, the assembly of Spanish grandees, in the great hall of the palace of Brussels, witnessed the surrender of the historic crowns of Castile and Aragon by Charles v. to his beloved only son. Heart-broken Mary Tudor from that day was Queen of Spain, as well as Queen of England. The title was a hollow one for her, though, for her mother's sake and her own, she loved the country which alone had succoured them in their trouble; for Philip's accession made the return of her husband to her side more than ever remote. Philip had promised faithfully to come back, and in his letters to her he repeated his promise again and again. On one occasion when he was indisposed, Mary sent a special envoy with anxious inquiries after his health. There was nothing more the matter than the result of some little extra gaiety on Philip's part; and he reassured his wife and announced his immediate visit to England. The English messenger, overjoyed at the good news, said to some of Philip's gentlemen, that, though he was delighted to be able to bear the glad tidings to the Queen, he would take care not to tell her that his Majesty had exposed himself twice to the dreadful weather then prevailing, and of his dancing at weddings, as the Queen was so easily upset and was so anxious about him that she might be too much afflicted.[1]

But still Philip came not; and soon afterwards Mary

[1] Badoero to the Doge. Venetian State Papers. 15th December 1558.

was thrown into despair by the order from Brussels, that the King's household in England was to proceed to Spain. The English people followed the Spanish courtiers with reviling when they embarked, for the fear of being drawn into the war was stronger than ever; but to the Queen their departure was a heavy blow, for it meant that her husband would live in England no more. For a few months in the early part of 1556, the alliance of the Pope and the King of France against the Emperor and Philip was broken up by the settlement of a truce between the latter and the French King; and for a time matters looked more hopeful for Mary; but in the summer of 1556, the war with France broke out again, and Philip found himself face to face with a powerful coalition of the Papacy, France and the Turk. It meant a war over half of Europe, and now if ever England might aid its Spanish King Consort. Philip wrote constantly urging the English Council to join him in the war against France; but met only with evasions. Mary was breaking her heart in sorrow and disappointment, but was willing to do anything to please Philip. She had, moreover, her own grudge against France; for Noailles and his master had left no stone unturned to ruin her from the first day of her accession. But her Council, and above all, her subjects, had always dreaded this as a result of her Spanish marriage, and were almost unanimously opposed to the entrance of England into a strife which mainly concerned the supremacy of Spain over Italy. Mary, moreover, was in the deepest poverty, owing to her own firm resolve against all advice to restore to the church the forfeited tenths and first fruits; and the forced loans collected from the gentry, it was untruly said at the instance of the Spaniards for the purposes

of their war, had caused the deepest discontent in the country.

It was clear that nothing more could be got from England for Spanish objects unless some special effort were made, and Philip was forced to undertake the journey himself to try the effect of personal pressure. Mary's joy at the news of his coming was pathetic in its intensity, though Pole warned her that, as had happened on other occasions, Philip might not be able to come after all. The hope of seeing her husband again seemed to give her new life, and she hurried to London, visiting Pole at Lambeth on the way, and exerting herself to the utmost to win him to her side. Thenceforward for weeks, whilst the King's voyage was pending, the English Council sat nearly night and day, and couriers incessantly hurried backwards and forwards to and from London, Brussels, and Paris.[1] The French reinforced their troops around Calais and Guisnes, and all the signs pointed to the approach of a war between England and France at the bidding of Philip.

The King landed at Dover on the 18th March 1557, and again all his haughty frigidity gave way to genial smiles for all that was English.[2] To the Queen's delight he spent two quiet days with her alone at Greenwich, and then rode through London to Whitehall by her side as she sat in her litter. Their reception by the citizens was polite, but cold; for though

[1] Michaeli, the Venetian Envoy ('Calendar of Venetian State Papers'), mentions one extraordinary journey of a courier at this time from Paris to London in twenty-five hours.

[2] It is related by the Flemish envoy Courteville that on his way through Canterbury he entered the Cathedral with his spurs on, against the rule; and on being charged with this by a student, he paid the fine by emptying his purse of gold in the student's cap.

Philip personally was not unpopular, the idea of going to war with France for another nation's quarrel was distasteful in the extreme to Englishmen of all classes. What complicated the situation infinitely was that Philip was at war with the Pope—that violent, headstrong enemy of his house and nation, Cardinal Caraffa, Paul IV.—and Pole, as legate, could not even greet the King, much less acquiesce as a political minister in a war against the Papacy on the part of England. Mary, too, was torn between her devotion to the Church on the one hand and her love for her husband on the other. Her idea, and that of her Council, was to provide a subsidy and an English contingent to Philip, without entering into a national war; and this much, under the existing treaty between Charles V. and Henry VIII. in 1543, Philip had a right to claim if he was attacked by France.

But the King wanted more from his wife's country than that which he could have claimed even if he had not married the Queen, and he ceaselessly urged upon Mary, and upon her Council, heavily bribed to a man, the granting of much greater aid than that offered. He was at last successful in this, though it was still arranged that there was to be no declaration of war by Mary against France, the English forces being used only for the defence of Flanders and the territory of Calais. There were to be 8000 infantry and 1000 horse, and an English fleet with 6000 fighting men was to be raised and maintained, half at the cost of England and half by Philip.

When this had been arranged, France struck her counterblow, for it was clearly better for her to be at open war, in which she could adopt reprisals on the Scottish border, than to fight English contingents in

Philip's service. The English Protestant exiles in France were made much of and subsidised ; and hare-brained Stafford and his crew of foolish young gallants sailed from Dieppe on Easter Sunday to seize the crown of England for himself. He captured Scarborough, but himself was captured directly afterwards, and incontinently lost his head. It was a silly, hopeless business ; but the rebels had started from France, and had been helped by the French King, and the fact was argument enough. On the 6th June 1557, war was declared between England and France, and Philip, at last, saw some return for his marriage in England. He hated war, and his methods were in all things different from those of a soldier ; but his best chance of securing a durable peace was to show his strength whilst his hold over English resources lasted, and it was clear from Mary's declining health that this would not be long.

At the beginning of July, Philip rode for the last time from Gravesend through Canterbury to Dover, his ailing wife being carried in a litter by his side. On the 3rd July he bade her farewell as he stepped into the barge that carried him to the galleon awaiting him, and Mary, with death in her heart, turned her back to the sea, and went desolate to her home in London.

The combined army in Flanders was commanded by the brilliant young soldier, Emanuel Philibert of Savoy, who had 50,000 men, whilst the French army, under Constable Montmorenci, reached barely half that number. Savoy began the campaign by several rapid feints that deceived the French, and then suddenly invested St. Quintin, into which Coligny with 1,200 men just managed to enter before Savoy reached it. Finding himself in a trap, Coligny begged Montmorenci to

come to his relief. The first attempt at this failed; and on the the 10th August the French main body made a desperate effort to enter the town by boats over the Somme. This was found impossible, and Montmorenci's force was surprised and taken in the rear by Savoy's superior strategy. The order to retire was given too late, and the French retreat soon became a panic-stricken rout. Six thousand Frenchmen were killed, and as many more captured, with all the artillery and Montmorenci himself; and there was no force existent between Savoy's victorious army and the gates of Paris. Philip was at Cambrai during the battle; and if he had been a soldier, like his cousin Savoy, or even like his father, he might have captured the capital, and have brought France to her knees. But he turned a deaf ear to Savoy's prayers, and lost his chance, as he did all his life, by over-deliberation. *Te Deums* were chanted, votive offerings promised, joy bells rung, but Philip's host moved no further onward. St. Quintin itself held out for a fortnight longer; and murder, sack, and pillage, by the rascal mercenaries of Philip, held high saturnalia, in spite of his strict command, and to his horror when he witnessed the havoc wrought: and then, with the fatal over-deliberation that ruined him, he tamely quartered his men in the conquered territory instead of pressing his victory home.

The Germans, discontented with their loot, quarrelled and deserted by the thousand; the English, sulky and unpaid, grumbled incessantly; and the Spaniards asserted that they had shown no stomach for the fight before St. Quintin. Their hearts, indeed, were not in the war, for it concerned them not, and they demanded to be sent home. In London, the most was made of the victory of St. Quintin by the Queen's Government.

Bonfires blazed in the streets, free drink rejoiced the lieges, and Pole, in the Queen's name, congratulated Philip upon so signal a mark of divine favour; but the people wanted to gain no victories for foreigners, and obstinately refused to be glad. Philip, as usual, was pressed for money, and rather than keep the unruly English contingent through the winter, he acceded to their request to be allowed to go home.

Whilst Philip's forces were melting away in idleness the fine French army under Guise, who were fighting the Spaniards outside Rome, were suddenly recalled by Henry II. to the Flemish frontier. The Pope was then obliged to make terms with Alba, and withdrew from the war, leaving the greater antagonists face to face. The English fortress of Calais had been neglected, and at the declaration of war Noailles, on his way back to France, had reported that it might be captured without difficulty. Guise and his army from Italy suddenly appeared before the fortress, and stormed and captured the Rysbank-fort on the sandy island forming Calais harbour. The news, when it came the next day (4th January 1558), to Mary, found her again in high hopes of a child; and she received it bravely, setting about means to reinforce the town without the loss of a day. Lord Pembroke was ordered to raise a force of 5000 men and cross to Philip's town of Dunkirk. But before they were ready matters were desperate, for treachery was at work within and without the fortress of Calais. Lord Grey de Wilton at Guisnes was also in evil case; 'clean cut off,' as he says, 'from all aid and relief. I have looked for both out of England and Calais, and know not how to have help by any means, either of men or victuals. There resteth now none other

way for the succour of Calais, and the rest of your Highness's places on this side, but a power of men out of England, or from the King's Majesty, or from both.' A first attempt to storm the citadel of Calais failed, but a few days later a great force of artillery was brought to bear. Wentworth, the governor, and Grey, the governor of Guisnes, sent beseeching messages to Philip for relief, but the time was short, and no sufficient force to attack Guise could be raised. Philip from the first had been impressing upon the English Council the need for strengthening Calais; but, as we have seen, they were overburdened, without money, and without any able leader. Calais had been left to its fate, and on the 8th January 1558 the place cheerfully surrendered to the French. A few days afterwards Guisnes fell, and the last foothold of the English in France was gone for ever.

When Guise had first approached Calais, Philip instructed his favourite Count de Feria to hasten to England and insist upon reinforcements being sent. Before his departure Calais fell, and on arriving at Dunkirk to embark he learnt of the loss of Guisnes; whereupon he delayed his departure for a day, in order not to be the bearer of the last bad news. The tidings of the English defeats had fallen like a thunderbolt upon Mary and her advisers; but there was no repining yet, so far as the Queen was concerned, for God might yet, she hoped, send her a son, and then all would be well. She would, she said, have the head of any councillor of hers who dared to talk about making peace without the restitution of the captured fortresses; and church and laymen alike opened coffers wide to provide funds for avenging English honour and protecting English soil.

Feria arrived in London on the 26th January, though the primary reason of his mission had disappeared when Calais fell. He saw Mary immediately, and found her stout of heart and hopeful, desirous of all things to please her husband, though doubtful about the goodwill of her Council. Two days afterwards Feria met the Council in Pole's room, and presented his master's demands. Mary had told the ambassador that both they, and the people at large, were murmuring that the war was of Philip's making, and she thought that it would be well boldly to face and refute that point before it was advanced by the councillors. The Council listened politely to the King's message, and recognising that they had before them the ideas not only of King Philip, but of their own Queen as well, took time to reply. A day or two afterwards the Council visited Feria, and Archbishop Heath, the chancellor, delivered their answer. It was couched in submissive language towards Philip, and told a sorry story. Far from being able to send any troops across the sea, they badly wanted troops for their own defence. The coast and the Isle of Wight were at the mercy of the French, and an invasion was threatened over the Scottish Border. But if King Philip would send them 3000 German mercenaries, for which they would pay, they would quarter them in Newcastle to protect the north country, and they would then arm a hundred ships in the Channel with a considerable force of men, some of whom might be used, at need, for Philip's service. Feria reported that the 5000 Englishmen he had seen at Dover, intended for embarkation, were disorderly rascals, useless as soldiers, and he and his master agreed that nothing could now be expected

from England in the form of a military contingent for foreign service.

The country, says Feria, is in such a condition that if a hundred enemies were to land on the coast they could do as they liked.[1] Confusion was spreading throughout all classes in England, owing to the dislike of the war for the sake of Spain, and to the disquieting news of the Queen's health. Not a third of the usual congregation go to church since the fall of Calais, reported Feria; and when, in a conversation with the Queen, the ambassador explained to her how the Spanish nobility were bound to contribute so many mounted men each, in case of war, Mary sadly shook her head at the idea of applying any such rule to England. 'Not all the nobility of England together,' she said, 'would furnish her with a hundred horse.' Parliament was sitting, and at the demand of money tongues began to wag that it was to send across the sea to the Queen's Spanish husband, whose proud envoy could only sneer and scoff at the clumsy English way of raising funds for their sovereign, and tell everybody that he would be only too glad if he could prevail upon them to raise the necessary money for their own defence, for his master wanted none of it from them.

Philip did not go so far as that, for he was very hard pressed indeed, and urged upon Mary some other way of collecting funds besides the parliamentary vote. In vain Gresham tried to borrow £10,000 in Antwerp on the Queen's credit; attempts to cajole more money from the church and the nobles were made with but small result. The money from the parliamentary grant and other sources that could be

[1] Feria to the King. MSS., 'Simancas Estado,' 811.

got together was sent to Flanders to pay for the raising of German levies for the English service; and at once the murmurs in London grew to angry shouts, that English money was being sent out for King Philip. The fitting out of the English fleet, ostensibly for coast defence, was hurried forward, for the distracted English councillors were deluded into the idea that a great combined movement would be made to recover Calais: they were frightened by a false rumour that there was a strong French fleet at Dieppe, that the Hanse Towns and Denmark would descend on the east coast; anything to get them to push forward a strong fleet, really, though not ostensibly, for Philip's purpose. But Philip took care when the fleet was ready that Clinton should use it as he desired;[1] and the much-talked of 3000 German mercenaries never came to England, but in due time were incorporated in Philip's army. It is curious to see how cleverly Feria and his master worked off the Queen against her councillors, and vice versa. With regard to these mercenaries, for instance, though the King was constantly sending letters and messages to his wife, he purposely refrained from mentioning his desire to make use of the Germans, for whom she had paid. 'I am writing nothing of this to the Queen,' he wrote; 'I would rather that you (Feria) should prudently work with the councillors to induce them to ask *us* to relieve them of these troops.'[2]

Mary's hopes of progeny were once more seen to be delusive; and she, in deep despondency now, was

[1] This English fleet was mainly instrumental in gaining for the Flemings a great victory over the French under Termes in July 1558.

[2] MSS., 'Simancas Estado,' 811.

seen to be rapidly failing. Pole also was a dying man, said Feria; and all the other councillors, though constantly clamouring for Spanish bribes, were drifting away from the present regime. 'Those whom your Majesty has rewarded most are the men who serve the least: Pembroke, Arundel, Paget, Petre, Heath, the Bishop of Ely and the Controller.' Even Philip himself was ready now to turn to the rising sun, and away from his waning wife. 'What you write (he replied to Feria) about visiting Madam Elizabeth before you leave England, for the reasons you mention, seems very wise; and I am writing to the Queen that I have ordered you to go and see the Princess, and I beg the Queen also to order you to do so.'[1] When Feria had frightened the Queen and Council out of all that was possible, he went to Hatfield to see Elizabeth, with all manner of kind messages and significant hints from Philip; and sailed from England in July, leaving as his successor a Flemish lawyer named D'assonleville.

Mary had lost all hope. She knew now, at last, that she would never be a mother: the persecutions for religion, and above all the war for the sake of Philip, had made her personally unpopular, as she never had been before; she had not a single, honest capable statesman near her, Pole being now moribund, but a set of greedy scamps who looked to their own interests alone; and the doomed Queen saw that not for her was to be the glory of making England permanently Catholic, and ensuring uniformity of faith in Christendom. As the autumn went on the Queen's condition became more grave, and constant fever weakened her sadly. In the last week of October

[1] MSS., 'Simancas Estado,' 811.

D'assonleville wrote to Philip that the Queen's life was despaired of, and Feria was instructed to make rapidly ready to cross, and stay in England during the period of transition that would supervene on her death. On the 7th November D'assonleville wrote again, urging that, as Parliament had been summoned to consider the question of the succession, it would be well that Philip himself should if possible be present. This was true; but Philip had his hands full, and, even for so important an errand as this, he could not absent himself from Flanders; for the peace commissioners from England, France, and Spain were in full negotiation, and peace to him now was a matter of vital importance.

Feria arrived in London on the 9th November, and found Mary lying in her palace of Saint James's only intermittently conscious. She smiled sadly as the ambassador handed her Philip's letter, and greeted her in his name; but she was too weak to read the lines he had written, though she indicated that a favourite ring of hers should be sent to him as a pledge of her love. Her faithful Clarentius and beloved Jane Dormer, already betrothed to Feria, whom she afterwards married, tended her day and night: but most of the others who had surrounded her in the day of her glory were wending their way to Hatfield, to court the fair-faced young woman with the thin lips and cold eyes who was waiting composedly for her coming crown. Feria himself took care to announce loudly his master's approval of Elizabeth's accession when her sister should die; and did his best to second the Queen's efforts to obtain some assurance from the Princess that the Catholic faith and worship should be maintained in England. Elizabeth was cool and diplomatic. She

knew well that she must succeed in any case, and was already fully agreed with her friends as to the course she should take, careful not to pledge herself too far for the future; and when Feria, leaving the Queen's death-bed, travelled to Hatfield to see the Princess, she was courteous enough, but firmly rejected every suggestion that she should owe anything to the patronage of the King of Spain.

Mary in her intervals of consciousness was devout and resigned, comforting the few friends who were left to sorrow around her bed, and exhorting them to faith and fortitude. It was the 17th November, and the light was struggling through the murky morning across the mist upon the marshes between Saint James's and the Thames, when the daily mass in Mary's dying chamber was being celebrated. The Queen was sick to death now, but the sacrament she ordered for the last time riveted her wandering brain, and the clouds that had obscured her intelligence passed away, giving place to almost preternatural clearness. She repeated the responses distinctly and firmly; and when the celebrant chanted '*Agnus Dei qui tollis peccatur mundi,*' she exclaimed with almost startling plainness, '*Miserere nobis! Miserere nobis! Dona nobis pacem*'; then, as the Host was elevated, she bowed in worship, with closed eyes that opened no more upon the world that for her had been so troubled.

And so, with a prayer for mercy and peace upon her lips, and her last gaze on earth resting upon the holy mystery of her faith, Mary Tudor went to her account.[1] Her life was but a passing episode in the

[1] This account of Mary's last hours is from the Life of Jane Dormer, Duchess of Feria, by her confessor and secretary, Father Clifford.

English Reformation; for she was handicapped from the first by her unpopular marriage, and the unstatesmanlike religious policy of her ecclesiastical advisers. Like her mother, and her grandmother Isabel, she would deign to no compromise with what she considered evil. 'Rather would I lose ten crowns if I had them,' she exclaimed once, 'than palter with my conscience'; and, though to a less exalted degree, this was Philip's attitude of mind also. Fate cast them both in an age when rigidity of belief was breaking down before the revival of ancient learning, and the widened outlook of life growing from the renaissance. They were pitted against rivals whose convictions were as wax, but who were determined not only to win but to appear right in this world, at any sacrifice of principle; and the fight was an unequal one. Mary could not change—only once under dire compulsion did she even pretend to give way in the matter of religion—Elizabeth changed as often and as completely as suited her purpose: Philip had only one invariable set of convictions and methods, his rivals had none, but invented them and abandoned them as occasion served.

And so Mary Tudor failed; pitiably, because she was naturally a good woman, who did her best according to her conscience. But the defects of her descent were too strong for her: she was a Tudor, and consequently domineering and obstinate; she was a granddaughter of Isabel the Catholic, and as a natural result mystically devout and exalted, caring nothing for human suffering in the pursuit of her saintly aims; she was an English Queen, proud of her island realm; a Spanish princess, almost equally proud of the land of the Catholic kings; and, to crown all, she was the consort

of Philip II., pledged to the cause for which he lived, the unification of the Christian faith and the destruction of the power of France. Within a year of her death England was a Protestant country, and Philip was married to a French princess.

BOOK III

II

ISABEL OF THE PEACE

(ELIZABETH DE VALOIS)

BOOK III

When Mary Tudor lay dying at Saint James's, and all England was in the throes of coming change, Feria archly hinted to Elizabeth that she might secure her succession and consolidate her throne by marrying her Spanish brother-in-law when her sister should die. Elizabeth loved such hints and smiled, though she did not commit herself; and for the next few weeks the main endeavour of Philip and his agents was to perpetuate his hold over England by means of the marriage of the new Queen. They all failed at first to gauge her character. Feria was certain that if she decided to marry a foreigner, 'her eyes would at once turn to your Majesty'; and, at length, after his usual tedious deliberation and endless prayers, Philip once more donned the garb of matrimonial martyrdom and bade Feria offer his hand to the daughter of Anne Boleyn. The conditions he laid down were ridiculous, for even he quite misunderstood the strength of Elizabeth and the new national spirit of her people. She must amongst many other things become a Catholic, and obtain secret absolution from the Pope. 'In this way it will be evident that I am serving the Lord in marrying her, and that she has been converted by my act.' Elizabeth keenly enjoyed the compliment conveyed by the offer; but she neither wished nor dared to accept it, and she played with the subject with delightful skill until the latest possible moment. While

the question was pending, Philip kept open the peace negotiations with France, in order that, if he had his way in England, pressure might be exerted to obtain the restitution of Calais; but as soon as it became clear that he was being used by this cunning young woman as a cat's paw, he gave her clearly to understand that he intended to make peace himself, Calais or no Calais; and the treaty of Cateau Cambresis was signed on the 2nd April 1559, leaving the erstwhile English fortress in the hands of France.

Throughout the negotiations that followed Elizabeth's accession, Philip's advisers urged upon him incessantly the vital need for him to retain his hold over England by conquest and force if other means failed. The new Queen, they said, was not yet firmly established; the country was unsettled, and now was the time to act if ever. Philip was well aware that the friendship of England was of greater importance to him than ever, but he hated war, and the growth of protestantism in Europe, especially now that Elizabeth was Queen of England, had suggested to him a combination that exactly suited his diplomatic methods. When the peace negotiations had first been broached in the summer of 1558, Henry II. of France had suggested that a close league of the great Catholic powers might be formed to withstand the growth of heresy throughout Europe. Such combinations had been attempted several times before, but had never been sincerely carried out; national traditions had always been too strong. It had been further proposed at the ephemeral truce of Vaucelles in 1556, that the friendship of France and Spain might be cemented by the marriage of Philip's only son Carlos to Henry's eldest daughter Elizabeth of France.

The idea slumbered and the truce was broken; but at the begining of the peace negotiations of Cateau Cambresis the marriage was again brought forward, and in principle accepted by Philip. When it became evident after Mary Tudor's death that England under the new Queen might stand aside, or even permanently oppose Spain on religious grounds, Philip decided that an entire change of policy that should isolate Elizabeth would suit him better than war. So a close union with France was adopted; Philip's name was substituted for that of his son in the treaty, and the widower of thirty-two became the betrothed husband of the most beautiful and gifted princess in Europe, the dainty eldest daughter of Henry II. and Catharine de Medici. It was a clever stroke of policy; for it not only bound France to Philip against heresy everywhere, as it was intended to do, but it enabled him to counteract from the inside any attempt on the part of his allies to depose Elizabeth of England in favour of Mary Queen of Scots, the next Catholic heir and the betrothed wife of the Dauphin of France. So far as France was concerned, the substitution of Philip for his son as a husband of the princess was an advantage. Don Carlos, though of the same age as the bride (14), was a deformed, stunted epileptic, who probably for years to come, if ever, would not possess any political power; whereas Philip, in the prime of manhood, was by far the most powerful sovereign in the world at the time, and could, if he chose, at once render any aid that France might need in suppressing the reformers.

Elizabeth of Valois, or Isabel of the Peace, as the Spaniards called her, was the flower of an evil flock. Tall, graceful, and well formed, even in her precocious youth, she had been destined from her birth for splendid

marriage. 'My daughter, Elizabeth, is such that she must not be married to a duchy. She must have a kingdom, and a great one,' said her proud father once, when his younger daughter Claude was married to the Duke of Lorraine; and the Spanish ambassador, describing her magnificent christening feast at Fontainebleau, in July 1546, says that: 'Isabel was chosen for her name, because of the hope they have at a future time of a marriage between her and the Infant (*i.e.* Don Carlos), and Isabel is a name beloved in Spain.'[1] We may doubt the correctness of this; for the Princess's sponsor was Henry VIII. of England, and probably he chose the name after his own mother, Elizabeth of York.

Isabel grew up by the side of her sister-in-law, the young Queen of Scots; and although the latter was four years the senior of her companion, they were close rivals in the learning then becoming fashionable for young ladies of rank. The curious Latin and French didactic letters written by Mary Stuart, aged ten or eleven, to her little sister-in-law, although prim and priggish according to our present ideas, throw a flood of light upon the severe and systematic training for their future position that the young princesses underwent. After making all allowances for inevitable flattery on the part of such a courtier as Brantome, it is evident that Isabel was a beauty of the very first rank. 'Her visage was lovely and her eyes and hair black, which contrasted with her complexion, and made her so attractive, that I have heard say in Spain that the gentlemen did not dare to look at her, for fear of falling in love with her, and to their own peril making the King jealous. The

[1] A curious account of the splendid festival, which celebrated at the same time the signature of the peace with England and Isabel's baptism, is given by the Spanish ambassador. (Spanish Calendar, vol. viii., edited by Martin Hume.)

churchmen also avoided looking at her for fear of temptation; as they did not possess sufficient strength to dominate the flesh on regarding her.' In 1552 she was betrothed to Edward VI. of England, and this danger to Spain, averted by Edward's death, made Philip and his father all the more eager to keep a firm hold upon England as soon as Mary's accession made an alliance possible.

It was this young beauty of fourteen whose portrait by Janet was sent to Philip in the early days of 1559. He was always an admirer of women, and had been twice an affectionate husband; but his first wife he had married when he was but a boy, and she died within a year; and his second wife, Mary Tudor, was, as we have seen, married to him for political reasons alone. Doña Isabel de Osorio, who had been his acknowledged mistress for years, and had borne him children, had retired into a convent, and was, of course, now out of the question. The sight of this radiant young French beauty seems to have stirred Philip's heart to as much eagerness as he was capable of feeling.[1] But though the bride was an attractive one, and her own family exhausted eulogy in her praise, as well they might, for no princess of her time excelled her, the marriage was regarded on both sides as a political event of the first importance, though, as we shall see, it became really more important even than was anticipated. It was vital for Philip that he should have some control over French policy now that friendship with England was denied

[1] The Bishop of Limoges, writing to Cardinal Lorraine soon after the betrothal (8th August 1559), says: 'Never was a prince so delighted with any creature as he (*i.e.*, Philip) is with the Catholic Queen, his wife. It is impossible to put his joy in a letter.'—L. Paris, 'Negociations sous François II.'

him; whilst to have his own clever daughter by the side of Philip was to the King of France a guarantee that no step inimical to him would be taken in Spain without his knowledge, and that he could depend upon the help, or at least the neutrality, of Spain if he had to deal with the French and Scotch reformers, who seemed to threaten the basis of authority. Thenceforward the Catholic sheep were to stand apart from the Protestant goats throughout the world.

So, when the saturnine Duke of Alba, with his train of gallant gentlemen, rode into Paris on the 19th June 1559 to wed Isabel, as proxy for Philip, the court and capital, all swept and garnished in its gayest garb, were impressed with the knowledge that these brilliant nuptials were intended to mark a new departure in the politics of Christendom. Led by the princes of the blood royal of France, the Spaniards and Flemings who represented Philip rode through the crowded and jubilant city to the Louvre, heralded by triumphal music, and were received at the door by Henry II. and his court. Alba dismounted and knelt at the King's feet, but was raised and embraced by Henry, and, arm in arm, Philip's proxy and his erstwhile enemy entered the great hall where the Queen Catharine and her daughter sat in gorgeous state, surrounded by their ladies. As Alba knelt and kissed the hem of the girl's robe, it was noticed that the colour fled from her cheek, and she rose from her chair and remained standing whilst the Duke read to her Philip's message, and handed to her the splendid casket of jewels he had sent her. One of the gifts was a portrait of the bridegroom in a superb diamond locket, which Isabel pressed to her lips.

On the next day, 20th June, the same great hall

of the Louvre was crowded with the princes and nobles of France, whilst the solemn betrothal ceremony was performed that gave to Isabel the title of Queen of Spain: and on Thursday, 21st June, the capital was alive from early dawn for the marriage itself. Frenchmen and Spaniards alike could speak of nothing but the dignity and beauty of the bride. Even Alba, dour as he was, broke into exclamations at the perfections of the new Queen, and grew almost romantic in her praises in his letters to Philip. Isabel, indeed, had been well schooled by her mother, whom she feared and admired more than any other person in the world. Catharine de Medici was still, to some extent, in the shade, for the Duchess of Valentinois was the real Queen; but she was profoundly wise, and had moulded her favourite daughter well for the character she was destined to play. Isabel herself was fully conscious of the great position she was called to fill, and was proud of the triumph that was hers.

She bore herself throughout the trying ceremonies with a composure and grace which she knew were fitting for the Queen of Spain; and as she glided, holding her handsome father's hand, along the gorgeous raised and covered gangway leading from the bishop's palace to the great door of Notre Dame, she presented a vision of beauty adorned with such stately magnificence as can rarely have been surpassed, even at the marriage of her friend and sister-in-law, Mary Stuart, in the same place shortly before. The texture of Isabel's robe was literally interwoven with pearls. Round her neck was suspended Philip's portrait, and the great pear-shaped pearl which was the greatest treasure in the crown jewels of

Spain. Her mantle was of blue velvet, enriched with a border of bullion embroidery a foot wide. The train of this gorgeous robe was borne by her sister Claude, Duchess of Lorraine, and Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots, and, as she foolishly called herself, Queen of England. Isabel wore an imperial crown which, we are told, cast a halo of light around her as she walked, so refulgent were the jewels of which it was composed.[1] Alba, in cloth of gold and with the royal insignia, personated his absent master, and in his name was married to the Princess by Cardinal de Bourbon. Splendour truly seems to have excelled itself in that sumptuous court on this occasion; the long-standing enemies, France and Spain, each trying to outdazzle the other in its lavish magnificence.

But scowling faces there were not a few, for this was the triumph of the house of Lorraine, and the debonair Duke of Guise and his brothers took no pains to hide their elation, whilst the princes of the blood of the house of Bourbon, the Montmorencis and the reformers were full of foreboding, for they knew now that their enemies could look across the Pyrenees, almost certain of aid from the most powerful potentate on earth. Queen Catharine, too, clerical though she was, smiled with a bitter heart, for she had no love for the house of Guise. For days the festivities went on: masque and banquet, ball and tournament following each other with wearisome brilliancy, for another daughter of France, Margaret, was wedded at the same time to the Duke of Savoy, and the double nuptials called for double display.

At length the last and greatest of the gallant shows was held under the shadow of the Bastille, hard by the

[1] Miss Freer's 'Elizabeth de Valois,' quoted from Godefroi.

gate of St. Antoine, on the 30th June. In gorgeous tribunes under broidered silken canopies sat the Queen of France and Spain, Catharine and her dearest daughter; and the Duchesses of Lorraine and Savoy, with the fairest court in Christendom, gathered around the great parallelogram of the lists to witness the tournament. The glittering courtiers, gay as they looked, who stood behind the ladies in the seats, knew that the wedding feast really celebrated a political event of the first consequence. It foreboded the suppression of Protestantism in Scotland by France, a war with England, and the crushing of reform in France itself and in Flanders; for there was to be no more paralysing rivalry between Philip and his new father-in-law, and it made the Catholic Guises the masters of France.

But none could tell that the stroke that was to set all these events into immediate motion was to fall so soon. Henry II., shallow and vain of his unquestioned preeminence in the gallant sport, rode into the lists upon a big bay war horse, decked, like its rider, with the black and white devices and interlaced crescents of Diane de Poitiers, Duchess of Valentinois. The King of France was determined in the presence of the Spanish grandees to show that he, at least, was no carpet knight, like their King Philip, and he rode course after course victoriously with princes and nobles, until the light began to wane. Catharine, desirous of ending the dangerous sport, sent a message from her tribune to pray her husband to tilt no more for that day. Henry laughed to scorn such timid counsel. He would run once more against the Franco-Scot Montgomerie, Sieur de L'Orge, who tried his best to avoid the encounter without success. At the first shock Montgomerie's lance carried away the King's visor, but

the shaft broke with the force of the impact and a great jagged splinter pierced the eye and brain of Henry of Valois, who, within three days, was dead.

The whole political position was changed in a day. The new King Francis and his wife, Mary Stuart, were little more than children; and the young Queen's uncles the Guises would rule France unless Catharine the Queen Dowager could beat them on their own ground. For her, indeed, the hour had now come, or was coming. For years she had been patient whilst the King's mistress held sway; but if she could combine the enemies of the Guises now she might be mistress of France. The alliance with Spain was no longer to be used if she could help it as a means for crushing Protestantism; for to Protestantism she must partly look to crush the Guises; but if by diplomacy and the efforts of her daughter Isabel she could win Spanish support to her side on personal grounds, then she might triumph over her foes. It needed, as we shall see, consummate skill and chicanery, and, in the end, it did not succeed; for Philip would naturally in the long run tend towards the Guises, the enemies of reform, and he was easily led by a woman.

And thus the mission of Isabel of Valois in marrying Philip was changed in a moment by Montgomerie's unlucky lance thrust from a national and religious to a personal and political object. But Philip was a difficult man to be used for the ends of others; what he had needed was French neutrality whilst he tackled heresy, and he had no desire to forward the interests of an ambitious Italian woman whom he hated; though at first there was just one element that made him inclined to smile upon Catharine, doubtfully orthodox though she was. The Queen of Scots and France

was Catholic heiress of England; and the Guises were already preparing to employ French national forces to oust Elizabeth in favour of their niece. This Philip could never have permitted: better for him a Protestant England than a French England: so again national interests over-rode religious affinities, and before the ink of the treaty of Cateau Cambresis was well dry the spirit that inspired the agreement was as dead as the king who had conceived it.

Philip was still at Ghent when the news of Henry's death reached him, yearning to get back again to his beloved Spain, and full of anxiety that even there the detested heresy was raising its head in his absence. His Netherlands dominions would clearly have to be taught submission; Elizabeth of England was positively insolent in her disregard of him, and if Spain failed in orthodoxy then indeed would he and his cause be lost. His most pressing need therefore, for the moment, was to keep the alliance with France intact for the purpose he had in view, whilst restraining the activity of the Guises in England on behalf of their niece, Mary Stuart. All went well in this respect at first. The Montmorencis and the princes of Bourbon were divested of political power, the ultra Catholic party was paramount, and even the Queen mother, Catharine, was working in apparent harmony with the Guises. But to keep his hand firmly upon the machine of government in France, it was desirable for Philip to have at his side at the earliest possible day his young French wife. Whilst Isabel was yet in mourning seclusion with her mother, Philip continued to press for her early coming, and in July the French ambassador, the Guisan Bishop of Limoges, told the impatient bridegroom that the Princess now only awaited

the instructions of her future husband to commence the journey towards the Spanish frontier.

As usual, the smallest detail was discussed and settled by Philip with his Council at Ghent; the choice of the Queen's confessor, the exact etiquette to be followed on her reception in Spanish territory and afterwards, the number of her French household, the amount of baggage she and her suite might bring, and even the exact manner in which she was to greet the Spaniards who went to receive her. On the 3rd August Philip wrote from Ghent to the Cardinal Archbishop of Burgos to make ready with his brother, the Duke of Infantado, to proceed to the frontier for the new Queen's reception soon after the King himself should arrive in Spain. But Isabel's departure from her own land could not be arranged hurriedly. There was a prodigious trousseau to be prepared, so enormous, indeed, as to strike with dismay the Spanish officers who had to arrange for its conveyance over the Pyrenees and the rough bridle paths of Spain; Catharine, too, was loath to let her daughter go before she had indoctrinated her with her new task in Spain, and she insisted upon her attending the coronation of her brother, Francis II., at Rheims in mid September.

Philip, always impatient for the coming of his bride, arrived in Spain by sea on the 8th September 1559; and signalised his arrival by the great *auto de fe* at Valladolid, that was to indicate to Europe that heresy was to be burnt out of the dominions of the Catholic king. Full of far-reaching religious plans, for which it was necessary that he should be sure of France, the presence of his French wife by his side was more than ever necessary, and in October he sent a special envoy,

Count Buendia, to France to demand that the bride should start at once: 'first, because of the great desire of his Majesty to see and keep the Catholic Queen in his realm as soon as possible, he begs most earnestly his good brother the Christian King and Queen Catharine, to arrange so that, in any case, the Queen should start at once, and arrive at Bayonne by the end of November.'[1] Another letter from the King to the same effect was written to Isabel herself, and she in reply promised through the French ambassador in Spain to delay her departure no longer.

But week followed week, and yet the bride came not. Splendid presents and loving messages from Philip went to her frequently, and kind replies were returned from Isabel and her mother. But intrigue was already rife in the French court, and Catharine was trying to gain promises from Philip to support her against those who, she said, were bent upon disturbing her son's realm. So every excuse was seized upon to keep Isabel in France, until Philip had promised what was required. The French found him anything but compliant, and at length, in the depth of winter (17th December), Isabel, with her mother and brother, and a great train of courtiers, left Blois on her long journey south. The household of the new Queen appointed by her mother was extremely numerous, notwithstanding the remonstrances of Philip's agents, who broadly hinted that they would not be allowed to remain in Spain. Three of the Bourbon princes of the blood, Anthony, Duke of Vendome, husband of Jeanne d'Albret, titular Queen of Navarre, his brother, Cardinal de Bourbon, and the Prince of Roche sur Yon, were to accompany her

[1] 'Documentos Ineditos,' vol. iii. Philip to Francis II. from Valladolid.

to the frontier, a good excuse for sending them away from Paris, and two Bourbon princesses, the Countess d'Harcourt (Madame de Rieux), and her niece, Anne of Bourbon, were to go with her into Spain.

All these great personages and scores of others needed long lists of servitors and trains of baggage, and the journey over the snowy winter paths was long and tedious. The greatest difficulty was foreseen, however, in the transport over the Pyrenees of the vast mass of impedimenta taken by Isabel and her ladies. Much of it was sent by sea, and was only received in Spain after long delay and continued annoyance to the ladies, who had to appear in the ceremonies without their fine clothes. The girl lost heart as the time grew near to bid farewell to her mother. She loved France dearly, with an ardour she never lost to the last day of her life, and the French people returned her devotion. Along the roads to Chatellerault crowds stood in tears, invoking blessings upon the angel who was to be sacrificed on the altar of peace. France and Spain had been at war for generations: Philip's cold, haughty demeanour, which had earned him the dislike of Flemings, was equally distasteful to Frenchmen, and stories current of the gloomy rigidity of his monastic court struck the heart of the bright young beauty with fear and dread.

For some days Catharine and her daughter stayed at Chatellerault, loath to say good-bye; but at last, on the 29th November, the parting could be delayed no longer, and, heartbroken, mother and daughter took a tearful farewell. Isabel had been reared in the poetical court in which Ronsard sang, and every courtier wooed in verse. Mary Stuart throughout her life showed the effects of such training, and so did Isabel. She and

her mother had exchanged poetical letters during the months of their mourning, and continued to do so afterwards; and on her lonely way from Chatellerault Isabel solaced herself by inditing a letter in verse to the beloved mother whom she had just left. As poetry it leaves much to be desired. The poem is too long to quote, but in it the writer compares her desire to see her husband with the much stronger natural love for her mother, who, she says, is to her father, mother, and husband in one. The epistle ends thus :—

'Tantost je sens mon œil plorer puis ryre,
Mais la fin est toujours d'estre martyre,
Qui durera sans prendre fin ne cesse,
Jusques á tant que je reprenne adresse
Pour retourner vers vous en diligence :
Lors oblyant la trop facheuse absence
Je recevrai la joye et le plaisir,
Et joyrez de mon parfait desir
D'ensemble veoir père mère et mari.'[1]

The next morning brought Isabel a similar poem of regretful adieu from her mother, and some really poetical lines from Mary Stuart, in which the following occur :—

'Les pleurs font mal au cœur joyeux et sain,
Mais au dolent, ils servent quasi de pain :
Car si le mal par les pleurs n'est allegé
A tout moins il en est soulagé.'

Through snow-clad France the long cavalcade slowly made its way. Endless questions of etiquette, prompted by pride and jealousy on both sides, occupied French and Spanish officials the while. Philip, as usual, saw to the smallest point himself. The proud Mendoza

[1] Bibliotheque Nationale, 'Fonds François,' No. 7237, where there is a considerable collection of the poems of both mother and daughter unprinted. Miss Frere quotes some of Catharine's lines to Isabel, but not the above.

Cardinal objected to give precedence to the King of Navarre, as he was not a real king, and the Doge of Venice had always given place to Cardinal Mendoza. 'The Prince of Roche sur Yon may be called "lordship," because he is of royal blood, but he must have only the privileges of an ambassador whilst in Spain.' The Countess of Ureña, who was to be Isabel's mistress of the robes, a proud dame in Philip's entire confidence, was to keep close to the Queen, and decide all points of feminine etiquette; whilst Lopez de Guzman, Isabel's Spanish chief steward, was to arrange everything according to Spanish etiquette in her table service. Cardinal Mendoza was instructed to alight and salute the Queen humbly when he first approached her, and his brother the Duke was to kiss her hand, notwithstanding any reluctance she might show. Each morning the Cardinal was to visit her, whereupon she was to receive him standing, and order an arm-chair to be brought for him, and he was to be seated whilst he stayed with her. The Duke of Infantado, chief of the Mendozas, was only to be received by the Queen standing the first time he visited her, and for him was to be brought a red velvet stool upon which to sit; but the Duke was warned that this privilege was only to last during the journey, and was to cease when Isabel joined her husband.[1] And so on, down to the smaller courtiers in gradation, the honours to be given and received are all set down in minute detail, that of itself was sufficient to strike awe in a young girl of fifteen, who had passed her life in the gay poetical court of her father.

It was a cruel irony that sent Anthony de Bourbon, the shadowy King Consort of Navarre, to deliver the

[1] 'Documentos Ineditos,' vol. iii.

French Consort of the real King of Navarre to her husband on the frontier of the little mountain kingdom, and he probably only accepted the mission in the hope that the long-pending negotiations with Spain, for giving him some adequate compensation, such as the title of King of Sardinia, might be advantageously pushed on such an occasion. Philip fooled poor vain Anthony as long as it suited him, but without the remotest intention of giving any satisfaction to the house of Navarre. When, therefore, in deep snow-drifts the Queen's cavalcade reached the little frontier town of St. Jean Pied de Port on the last day in the year 1559, and France was all behind them, Anthony and the other Bourbon princes were on the alert to resent any slight that might be offered to them by the Spaniards. The exchange of the Queen to the custody of her husband's envoys was to be made at a point between St. Jean and the Spanish hamlet of Roncesvalles, but the inclement weather and heavy snow made it impossible to reach the elevated spot agreed upon; and for three days Isabel and her French suite tarried weatherbound at St. Jean. For the first time she donned there the Spanish dress, and received some of her Spanish household; and on the 3rd January 1560 she started on horseback towards the frontier, for she refused to enter her new realm in a litter, and thus, with her veritable army of attendants and baggage-train, she tramped through the savage pass and into the valley of Valcarlos into Spain.

The cold was intense, and through the elevated mountain paths the snowstorm drove furiously, yet she pushed bravely on until she could gain the shelter of the monastery church of Our Lady of Roncesvalles in Spanish territory. It was a great concession for

the French to make, and Anthony de Bourbon would not have crossed the frontier first but for the insistence of Isabel, and the impossibility of carrying out the ceremonious programme of handing over the Queen in a Pyrenean pass in a mid-winter snowstorm. Further than Roncesvalles he was determined he would not go, though only five miles further, at the village of Espinal, the Cardinal and the Duke with the Spanish train were lodged. At the gate of the Augustinian monastery, where the King of Navarre helped the almost frozen Queen to alight, there stood beside the prior and dignitaries a group of Spanish nobles who had ridden over from Espinal unofficially to greet their new Queen; and after the religious ceremony and prayers in the beautifully decorated church, these nobles and their followers almost came to open fight with the Frenchmen. As Isabel left the church to enter the apartments in the monastery assigned to her, the Spaniards, jealous that in their own country Frenchmen alone should attend the Queen, flocked in unbidden after her, and had to be forcibly ejected by those in attendance upon her.[1]

Distrust and suspicion prevailed on all hands. It had been arranged, after much courtly wrangling, that the transfer of the custody of the Queen should take place at a point exactly midway between Roncesvalles and Espinal, but King Anthony made the weather an excuse—probably a perfectly good one—for urging the Spaniards to come the whole way to Roncesvalles, rather than expose the Queen and themselves to a long ceremony in an open field three feet deep in

[1] The account of Isabel's voyage and reception is drawn mainly from the narratives of eyewitnesses in the correspondence published by M. L. Paris in 'Negociations sous François II.'

snow. But Infantado was shocked at the idea that he and his brother the Cardinal should be asked to go a step further than the Frenchmen, and refused. Anthony remonstrated, but in vain; and in the lone monastery in the Pyrenean valley Isabel passed two more days waiting for either the pride or the snow to melt. At length she lost patience. She was as tenacious of French honour as any one, but she well knew that the success of her mission depended upon her winning the affections of the Spaniards, and on the 5th January she sent for Navarre and told him that she intended herself to ride to the spot agreed upon for the exchange. The French nobles were indignant, and at first inclined to shirk the journey, but Isabel, young as she was, could be imperious and insisted; and in torrents of sleet the great cavalcade, with the ceremonial finery already bedraggled, had prepared to start, when the welcome message came from Espinal that the Duke and the Cardinal had relented, and were now on their way to Roncesvalles to obey, as they said, the summons of their Queen.

The utmost confusion then ensued, for the whole of the baggage, with hangings, furniture and dresses had been packed, and much of it had already started forward, especially the best frocks and furbelows of Isabel's crowd of ladies, who saw their beds and finery no more for many a long day. The light was failing in the stormy winter day when Cardinal Mendoza and his brother Infantado, preceded by sixty Spanish nobles in brave attire, marched side by side up the great torch-lit hall, at the end of which Cardinal de Bourbon stood upon a canopied dais, surrounded by French ecclesiastics and nobles. Under the cloth

of state, blazoned with the lilies of France, the powers of the envoys were exchanged and read; and then, with much stately salutation and stilted verbiage, the Spanish nobles were led to the chamber where, upon a raised throne, Isabel awaited them with King Anthony and the two Bourbon ladies. But the place, a solitary mountain monastery, was unfit for courtly ceremonies; and the Spaniards were so eager to do homage to their new Queen that soon all seemliness was lost, and a jostling crowd filled the presence chamber, each Spaniard trying to get the best place and hustling rudely aside the French, and even the French ladies in attendance, until the latter had to retire.

Isabel remained calm and dignified, determined to say nothing to offend the Spaniards; but when the Mendozas advanced, and the actual exchange was to be made, she turned pale as she stood to receive and greet them. Through the interminable pompous speeches that accompanied her transfer she remained outwardly unmoved, but when Navarre had actually handed to the custody of Spaniards 'this princess, whom I have taken from the house of the greatest king in the world to be delivered to the most illustrious sovereign upon earth,' and the Bourbon princes came forward and knelt to say farewell, the girl's strength broke down, and she wept bitterly. Cardinal Mendoza, apparently to improve the occasion, advanced and chanted the verse, *Audi filia et vide inclina aurem tuam*, and the response was intoned by another Spanish priest, *obliviscere populum tuum, et domum patris tui.* She loved her people and the home of her fathers dearly; she was going, almost a child, to live the rest of her life amongst strangers

who had been the enemies of her house for generations, to wed a man she had never seen, but of whom she could have heard little but evil; and, as the words of the versicle were croaked by the ecclesiastic, they seemed to the overwrought girl a sentence of doom, and in an agony of tears she threw herself into the arms of Anthony of Navarre and his brother the Cardinal. She was led away gently by Infantado, with some chiding words that she, the Queen of Spain, should so condescend to the Duke of Vendome. In the midst of her grief she answered with spirit that she did so by order of her brother, and, 'as to princes of the blood, and after the fashion of the nation to which, up to that moment, she had belonged.'[1] And, so still in tears, the beautiful black-eyed girl was led to the Spanish litter awaiting her, and through the heavily-falling snow was carried, to the sound of many hautboys and trumpets, to the wretched village of Burgete, where she was to pass the night; even there, comforted by the beds, hangings, lights, food and delicacies, sent by her French countrymen to furnish forth her poor quarters.'[2]

There is no space here to follow the Queen step by step through her new country to join her husband. It was a progress full of jealousy and bitterness between the French household of the Queen, that still accompanied her, and the Spanish courtiers. At Pamplona, the capital of Navarre, where the company passed three days, Isabel charmed all hearts by her grace and beauty as she was carried through the thronged thoroughfares from the cathedral to the royal palace

[1] 'Négotiations sous François II.,' p. 173.

[2] Even more comforted, we are told, were the poor maids of honour, whose own beds and baggage had gone astray.

where she was to lodge. At the foot of the grand staircase stood a lady of fifty, stern and haughty in appearance, but now all smiles as she kissed the hand of the Queen and delivered to her a letter from King Philip. It was the Countess of Ureña, daughter of the Alburquerques and the Toledos, and one of the greatest ladies in Spain, who had been chosen by Philip as the guide, philosoper and friend of his new consort. She looked sourly upon the two Bourbon princesses whom she was obliged to salute; and on the departure from Pamplona after three days of rejoicing Isabel, desirous of propitiating the Countess of Ureña, whom Philip had praised inordinately in his letters, offered her a seat in her own litter. This she thought fit to refuse, as she was panting for the fray to establish her precedence next to the Queen; and when the cavalcade was starting her lackeys, violently hustling aside the equipage of the elder Bourbon princess Madame de Rieux, intruded that of the countess into the place in front of it. An affray resulted, and an appeal to the Queen, who decided politely in favour of the blood royal of France until King Philip himself should give his orders—which he subsequently did by placing the countess between Madame de Rieux and her unmarried niece. But the proud dame stored up in her mind the memory of the slight, and many a troubled hour for Isabel grew out of this incident.

The young Queen's life in Spain may now be said to have commenced, and already she had shown the tact and diplomacy so extraordinary in a girl of fifteen. Her hold upon the affection of the Spaniards was tenacious from the first, owing partly, of course, to her great beauty and sweetness, but also to her

prompt adaptability and acceptance of Spanish customs. From her childhood she had studied Spanish, and a very few weeks after her entrance she spoke it fluently. But she never forgot her own people and her own tongue. 'To Frenchmen she always spoke in French,' wrote Brantome, 'and would never consent to discontinue it, reading always in French the most beautiful books that could be got in France, which she was very curious to obtain. To Spaniards and other foreigners she spoke Spanish very correctly. In short, this princess was perfect in everything, besides being so splendid and liberal as never was seen. She never wore a dress twice, but gave them all after once wearing to her ladies; and God knows what rich and splendid dresses they were; so rich and superb, indeed, that the least of them cost three or four hundred crowns, for the King, her husband, kept her very lavishly in such things. Every day she had a new one, as I was told by her own tailor, who went thither a poor man and became richer than anybody, as I have seen with my own eyes. She was always attired with extreme magnificence, and her dresses suited her beautifully: amongst others, those with slashed sleeves with laced points, and her head-dress always matched, so that nothing was wanting. Those who saw her thus in a painted portrait admired her, and I will leave you to guess the delight it was to see her face to face with her sweetness and grace. . . . When she went walking anywhere, either to church or to the monasteries or gardens, there was such a great press and crowds of people to gaze upon her that it was impossible to stir; and happy indeed was the person who could say after the struggle, "I have seen the Queen." Never

was a queen so beloved in Spain as she; not even the great Queen Isabel herself. The people called her the Queen of peace and goodness, and our Frenchmen called her the "olive branch." '[1]

Philip at Guadalajara, the town of the Mendozas, waited impatiently the coming of his bride. With him from Toledo had come his sombre widowed sister Joan, and when they learned, at the end of January 1560, that the Queen's cavalcade was approaching, it was made known that the King wished special efforts to be made by the city to welcome his bride. Through artificial flowering woods with tethered birds and animals, through lines of gaily decked booths amply supplied with good cheer for the free refreshment of her suite, by kneeling aldermen in crimson velvet and white satin, and through an admiring populace, Isabel of the Peace rode into the city between the Cardinal of Burgos and the Duke of Infantado. At the door of the famous palace of the Mendozas, where Philip lodged, stood Princess Joan, who half knelt and kissed the hem of the girl's garment; then led her by the hand into the large hall, at the end of which a sumptuous altar was erected. Before it, in a gilded chair, sat Isabel's husband, grave of aspect beyond his thirty-three years. He saluted his bride ceremoniously; and after mass at the altar the marriage was performed by Cardinal Mendoza.

Philip's impatience for his bride had been more political than personal, for he needed above all things to be sure of France, and there was at first little cordiality between the newly wedded pair. The first afternoon, as the sovereigns sat in their tribune witnessing the bull fight and cane tourneys held in the

[1] Brantome, 'Dames Illustres.'

great square of Guadalajara to celebrate the wedding, the frightened girl gazed so fixedly in the face of her husband that Philip became annoyed, and turned to her curtly and said: 'What are you looking at? To see whether I have grey hair.'[1] Through the tedious feasting that followed, the marriage still looked unpromising. The girl was unformed and inexperienced, and was overwhelmed with the importance of the task her mother had confided to her. Around her there raged incessant jealousy, both between the Countess of Ureña and her French ladies, and amongst the French ladies themselves, and it needed all the authority of Catharine de Medici, and the fear with which she inspired her daughter, to keep Isabel on the right path amidst the contending factions.

The letters that passed betwen them show how absolute was the command that at first Catharine exercised over her daughter, a command that later was to a great extent replaced by that of Philip. Isabel in the quarrels of her French ladies had sided with Madame Vimeux against her principal attendant, Madame de Clermont, and, girl like, had made friends with some of her younger French maids. Upon this her mother wrote to her as follows: 'It really looks very bad for you in the position you occupy to show that you are such a child still as to make much of your girls before people. When you are alone in your chamber in private, you may pass your time and play with them as much as you like, but before people be attentive to your cousin,[2] and Madame de Clermont. Talk with them often and believe what they say; for

[1] Brantome says he had this story from one of Isabel's ladies in waiting who was present.

[2] *i.e.* Anne of Bourbon Montpensier.

they are both wise, and aim at nothing but your honour and well being; whereas those other wenches can only teach you folly and silliness. Therefore do what I tell you, if you wish me to be satisfied with you and love you, and to show me that you love me as you ought.'[1]

From Guadalajara Philip and his Consort passed on to Toledo for the completion of the festivities, and to present his son Don Carlos to the Cortes, to receive their oath of allegiance as heir to the crowns of Castile. The capital received the Queen with unusual pomp, and after the public reception was over Isabel retired to her chamber with her favourite French maids, who for pastime danced before her. Soon the Queen, flushed and excited, rose and danced several times herself. Her high colour was noticed by some of the elder ladies, who had been instructed by Catharine to watch the precious health of her daughter closely; and in the morning Philip found that his girl wife was in a burning fever, which was soon pronounced to be small-pox.

Up to this time Philip had not been particularly demonstrative towards his French bride; and she had not quite got over her fear of him. But her dangerous illness struck both him and her mother with dismay. Each of them was determined to use her as a means to keep a hold upon the other, and her death threatened to be disastrous for both; but, apart from this, her mother was devotedly attached to her, and Philip was beginning to love her as he loved no other person in the world, except, years afterwards, his elder daughter by her. Couriers galloped backwards and forwards between Paris and Toledo with daily news of the progress of the malady. No fear for his health, no

[1] 'Negotiations sous Francois II.,' p. 706.

remonstrance from his courtiers, could persuade Philip to keep away from his sick wife; and for long periods during the most dangerous stages of her illness he would not leave her side. Catharine was almost beside herself with anxiety. For her everything depended upon her daughter's success in gaining influence over her husband, and for this Isabel's beauty was as necessary as her life. The attack proved to be light, and the patient was soon out of danger; but Catharine showered upon the ladies in attendance questions and counsels innumerable, as to the marks left by the fell disease. The many remedies she sent appear, according to Brantome, to have given way to the one which he mentions as having saved the Queen from disfigurement; namely, the covering of the exposed skin with fresh white of egg. Though Isabel was soon out of danger her convalescence was long and tedious, and the intimate details of her bodily habit and condition that passed between Catharine and Madame de Clermont, frank to the extreme of coarseness, show how increasingly the Queen-Mother was depending upon her Spanish son-in-law to sustain her amidst the warring interests that were rapidly dividing France.

The irregularities so frequently reported by Madame de Clermont in Isabel's health, at one time seem to have suggested to her distracted mother that her disorder was the outcome of the dreadful disease which it was stated she had inherited from her grandfather Francis I.; and Catharine alternated scolding with prayers to her daughter to be circumspect, until Isabel trembled with very fear when she opened one of her mother's letters.[1] 'Recollect' (wrote Catherine), 'what I told you before you left. You know very well how

[1] Brantome, 'Dames Illustres.'

important it is that no one should know what malady you have got; for if your husband were to know of it he would never come near you.'[1] France had abandoned almost every thing at the Peace of Cateau Cambresis in order to gain the support of Spain against religious reform, and Catharine now looked to her daughter to bring the same influence upon her side in any case. Everything depended upon this girl's being able to captivate her experienced husband and to lead him as she liked. Philip, it is true, was now in love with her; but his policy was founded upon a fixed principle: it was never swayed by personal affection; and Isabel was really as powerless to move him as all others who tried to do so.

Catharine had impressed particularly upon her daughter that she was to use every effort to draw the ties between France and Spain closer, by bringing about a marriage of her young sister Margaret[2] with Don Carlos: or, in any case, to oppose to the utmost his marriage with an Austrian cousin; even if it were necessary to marry him to his aunt Joan. When Isabel entered Toledo she saw for the first time Philip's heir. He was within a few months of her own age, a lame, epileptic semi-imbecile; already vicious and uncontrollable. When he approached his stepmother for the first time he was yellow and wasted with intermittent fever, and it was noticed that she caressed and petted him more than he had been accustomed to; for he had never known a mother. The passionate ill-conditioned boy had been told only a year ago to call this young beauty his wife, and now to see her the

[1] 'Negotiations sous François II.'

[2] *i.e.* Margaret of Valois, La Reine Margot, who afterwards married Henry IV., the Bearnais on the evil day of St. Bartholomew, and was subsequently put aside by him.



ISABEL OF VALOIS.

After a Painting by Pantoja.

important it is that no one should know what malady you have got; for if your husband were to know of it he would never come near you.'[1] France had abandoned almost every thing at the Peace of Cateau Cambresis in order to gain the support of Spain against religious reform, and Catharine now looked to her daughter to bring the same influence upon her side in any case. Everything depended upon this girl's being able to captivate her experienced husband and to lead him as she liked. Philip, it is true, was soon in love with her; but his policy was founded upon a fixed principle to which nothing, not even personal affection, could be sacrificed. Nothing should tempt him as all others had tried to do.

Catharine had impressed particularly upon her daughter that she was to use every effort to draw the ties between France and Spain closer, by bringing about a marriage of her young sister Margaret[2] with Don Carlos; or, in any case, to oppose to the utmost his marriage with an Austrian cousin; even if it were necessary to marry him to his aunt Joan. When Isabel entered Toledo she saw for the first time Philip's heir. He was within a few months of her own age, a lame, epileptic semi-imbecile; already vicious and uncontrollable. When he approached his stepmother for the first time he was yellow and wasted with intermittent fever, and it was noticed that she caressed and petted him more than he had been accustomed to; for he had never known a mother. The passionate ill-conditioned boy had been told only a year ago to call this young beauty his wife, and now to see her the

[1] 'Negotiations sous François II.'

[2] I.e. Margaret of Valois, La Reine Margot, who afterwards married Henry IV., the Huguenot on the evil day of St. Bartholomew, and was subsequently put aside by him.



wife of the father, whom he feared and hated, turned his heart to gall. During her illness and convalescence he was ceaseless in his inquiries about her; and when her health again allowed her to resume her family life, she went out of her way to entertain and please him. It was probably the only gentle feminine influence he had ever experienced, for his widowed aunt Joan, whom he alternately loathed and adored, was a gloomy religious mystic, almost old enough to be his mother; and Isabel was not only just his own age, beautiful and French, but for the purposes of her mother exerted all her charms to gain his goodwill.

The romantic story that makes her fall in love with this poor unwholesome boy may be put aside as baseless; but it is probably true that her own charms, added to his jealousy and hate of his father, made him fall in love with her. The letters Isabel wrote to her mother at the time all speak of Philip as a most affectionate husband, and of Don Carlos simply with pity for his ill-health; whilst Catharine's replies constantly urge her to incline her stepson to a marriage with her sister Margaret; 'or you will be the most unfortunate woman in the world if your husband dies, and the Prince (Carlos) has for a wife any one but your own sister.' Unfortunately the youth was unable to hide his extravagant affection for his young stepmother; and soon all the French ladies were nodding and shrugging their shoulders at the romance that was passing before their eyes, which probably Isabel herself hardly understood.

The need for Catharine to draw personally nearer to Spain was greater, and yet more difficult, than ever after the death, in November 1560, of her young son Francis II. There was no fear now of France being

drawn into war again for the benefit of Mary Stuart, but, on the other hand, Mary Stuart herself, being a widow, might marry Don Carlos, and become, by Spanish aid and the efforts of the English Catholics, Queen of Great Britain, in which case France would be isolated indeed.[1] Cardinal Lorraine, and afterwards Mary herself, bade briskly for this match; but, though Philip shrank from saying so, Carlos was, he knew, unfit for marriage altogether. In answer to Catharine's constant pressure upon her daughter to persuade Carlos to marry Margaret, Isabel repeatedly assured her that she would do her best, and she appears to have made a sort of alliance with his aunt Joan to forward *her* cause if the marriage with Margaret was found impossible.

Philip's sister, the wife of Maximilian, heir to the empire, wrote to Isabel early in 1561, asking her to lend her help to the suit then being pressed by the imperial ambassador for the marriage of Carlos with one of his Austrian cousins, the Archduchess Anne,[2] and Isabel, in giving an account of this to her mother, says that she showed the letter to Princess Joan, who had received a similar letter, and angrily expressed her opinion to Isabel that the plan was directed against her (Joan); with which opinion Isabel agreed. 'I spoke to the King about it,' wrote Isabel to her mother, 'telling him that the Queen of Bohemia had made one exception (before her daughter's claim was put forward), whereas I made two; namely, first my sister, and, secondly, the Princess (Joan). He replied that his son was yet so young, and in such a condition, that

[1] Particulars of these intrigues will be found in 'The Love Affairs of Mary Queen of Scots' by Martin Hume.

[2] She afterwards married Philip himself as his fourth wife.

there was plenty of time for everything yet, though the Prince has got over his quartan fever.'[1] To the imperial ambassador Philip gently hinted also that his son's infirmity of mind and body made it impossible to arrange seriously for his marriage; but Catharine was not to be put off easily, and Isabel did her best to obey her.

The Queen mother, sending her own portrait and that of her son, the new boy King of France, Charles IX., to her daughter, included in the parcel a likeness of her daughter Margaret; and one of Isabel's maids writes of the joy that the pictures of her dear ones gave to the Queen; who, she says, after having recited her prayers at night in church, went to her chamber, and said them again before her mother's portrait. When the precious portraits were unwrapped Princess Joan was there to admire them, and soon Don Carlos came in. 'Which is the prettiest of them?' he was asked. 'The *chiquita*,' he naturally replied; whereupon one of the ladies drove home the lesson by saying, 'Yes, you are quite right, for she is the most fit for you'; whereupon he burst out laughing.[2] Isabel herself wrote joyfully to her mother that Carlos was pleased with Margaret's portrait, and had repeated to her three or four times laughing that the 'little one was the prettiest; if she was like that;' whereupon Isabel assured him that she was '*bien faite*,' and officious Madame de Clermont interjected that she would make a good wife for him, to which the lad, though he giggled, made no reply. Philip also, probably to please his wife, confessed that the portrait of her younger sister was very beautiful: but it was

[1] Négociations sous François II.
[2] *Ibid.*

noticed that, simultaneously with these transparent matrimonial intrigues, he suddenly began to pay ostentatious attention to his sister Joan, whose marriage with her nephew Carlos was always a possibility to play off against other matches proposed.

The kindliest relations were now established between Philip and his young wife, and though he was usually absorbed in governmental detail early and late, Isabel's life was not a gloomy one. The two boys of Maximilian, King of the Romans, the future emperor, and of Philip's sister Maria, were being brought up in the Spanish Court; and though they were kept very close to their studies, they were allowed to come and see Isabel and her ladies every afternoon to dance and romp as they pleased. Carlos also took every opportunity of being in the company of his stepmother, and the brilliant young Don Juan of Austria, Philip's half-brother, and Alexander Farnese, his nephew, were frequent visitors, all being lively handsome youths except, indeed, poor fever-wasted Carlos, fretting his weak wits to frenzy in unrequited love and impotent spite.

In the summer of 1561 hopes were entertained that the Queen might fulfil her husband's dearest wish and make him the father of another son, and the King's delight at the prospect was unbounded. He caused to be made a solid silver sedan chair in which to carry his wife to Madrid, and overwhelmed her with attentions. But to Isabel's grief the hope was fallacious, and Philip was tenderly solicitous to solace his wife's disappointment. 'Il avait toute la peine du monde de la consoler, et lui tenir beaucoup plus privée et plus ordinaire compagnie que n'avait jamais fait, de manière qu'il n'a été que bon que tous deux ayent eu cette

opinion. Il me fit l'honneur de me prier que je l'allasse consoler, et lui dire qu'elle lui volust donner ce contentement et plaisir de ne s'en fachier, et mesme quand on seroit à Madrid, que ma femme le lui allast aussi dire, et user de tous ses bons offices qu'elle scavoit bien faire en son endroit. Elle est aujourd'hui, Madame, en tel estat pres du roy son mari que Votre Majesté, et tous ceux qui aiment son bien et sommes affectionnés à son service, en devront remercier Dieu.'[1]

In the midst of this happy and harmonious life in Spain, the girl Queen tactfully did her best to obey her mother and serve the France she always held dear, but it was inevitable that as time went on and the influence of her husband over her grew, she should take a more purely Spanish view of affairs. The death of young Francis II., and the fall of the Guises, had made the friendship between Spain and France more difficult than ever, for the profound religious divisions in the latter country forbade any possibility of the national power being used, as had been contemplated in the Peace of Cateau Cambresis in the suppression of heresy everywhere; whilst Catharine's now ostentatious friendship with the Bourbons and the reforming party, by which she hoped to counterbalance the Guises, deeply offended her son-in-law. Philip, however, at this time was in the depth of penury: his own Netherlands were simmering into revolt; he had suffered a terrible defeat at the hands of the Turk on the coast of Tunis (February 1560), and the Christian power in the Mediterranean was in the balance. Elizabeth of

[1] Letter from the French ambassador in Spain to Catharine de' Medici, quoted in 'Vie d'Elisabeth de Valois,' par le Marquis du Prat.

England, too, was more obstinate than ever in her adherence to the anti-Catholic policy, now that the strength of the Huguenot party in France banished the fear of a Catholic coalition of France and Spain against her. Much as Philip frowned at, and Isabel remonstrated against, Catharine's proceedings, the King of Spain was not in a position to make war upon France, and for a time was obliged to dissemble with his mother-in-law. So far, therefore, the Treaty of Cateau Cambresis had been a failure, and Isabel had been sacrificed in vain. France and Spain could not make common cause against Protestantism, and Isabel could not win Don Carlos for her sister nor make her astute husband the tool of her mother's plans, deeply as he loved his charming young wife.

With regard to the marriage of Carlos, Isabel was indefatigable in her efforts, but the prince grew more reckless than ever. In the spring of 1562 he was studying at the University of Alcalá, when, in descending a dark stairway to keep a secret assignation, he fell and fractured his skull. Philip and his wife were at Madrid when they received the news, and the King at once set out, travelling through the night full of anxiety for his son. He found him unconscious and partially paralysed: the doctors, ignorant beyond conception, treated him in a way that seems to us now nothing less than murderous. Purges, bleeding, unguents, charms, and, finally, the laying upon the bed of the unconscious lad the mouldering body of a monkish saint, Diego, were all tried in vain, until at last an Italian surgeon was bold enough to perform the operation of lifting the bone of the cranium that pressed upon the brain, and Don Carlos recovered his consciousness. But if he had been a semi-

imbecile before, he became at intervals after this accident a raving homicidal maniac. The prince himself, and those who surrounded him, attributed his recovery to the mummy of the dead monk, and promised to give for religious purposes in recognition of the miracle four times his own weight in gold. When he was weighed for the purpose it was found that, although he was seventeen years old, he only weighed seventy pounds.

But, no matter how weak or vicious Carlos might be, the struggle to obtain his hand in marriage was waged as keenly as ever by Isabel and her mother on the one hand, and by the Austrian interest on the other, with the Princess Joan, the lad's aunt, as a permanent candidate, to be used by Philip when he needed a diversion. Hardly had the grave anxiety about Carlos subsided when Isabel herself fell grievously ill, and was like to die. At the time that the physicians had abandoned hope of saving her (August 1562), Philip sent the Duke of Alba with a long message to the French ambassador, of which the latter wrote a copy to Catharine. He prefaces his letter by saying that the Queen was truly a bond of peace since she 'possède le roi son mari, et est aujourd'hui en toute privauté et autorité avec lui.' The message was to the effect that it had always been the rule when Spanish queens were ill, even slightly, to urge them to make their last dispositions in good time. On account, however, of the great love and extreme affection which he (Philip) bore to his wife, he had not allowed her in her present serious illness to be spoken to on the subject, so as not to distress or alarm her. For, as he said, he had in very truth good reason to love her dearly, and to take great

care of her; and if this loss should befall him, he would have reason to say that it was the greatest and most important he had ever suffered in his life, and that which most nearly touched his heart, seeing the shining virtues and noble qualities with which his wife was endowed. He makes a great point of honouring and pleasing her, and preventing her from being troubled in any way; but since the physicians said that she had reached such an extremity that her life could no longer be expected to last,[1] he would regret that his love for her, and his sorrow for her loss, should stand in the way of the duty she owed to her position and reputation to make a will.' He assured the French ambassador that his friendship for his wife's brother and mother would not be diminished by her death, and he proposed that she should leave two-thirds of her possessions to her mother, and the remainder be employed in pious uses

[1] Speaking of this illness Brantôme says quaintly, 'Elle tomba malade en telle extrémité qu'elle fut abandonnée des medecins. Sur quoy il y eut un certain petit medecin Italien qui pourtant n'avoit grande vogue à la cour, qui se presentant au roy, dit que, si on le vouloit laisser faire, il la gueriroit, ce que le roy permit: aussi estoit elle morte. Il entreprend et luy donne une medecine, qu'apres l'avoir prise on luy vit tout a coup monter miraculeusement la couleur au visage et reprendre son parler et puis après sa convalescence. Et cependant toute la cour et tout le peuple d'Espagne rompaient les chemins de processions, d'allées et venues qu'ils fasoient aux eglises et aux hospitaux pour sa Santé, les uns en chemise les autres nuds pieds, nues testes, offrans offrandes, prieres, oraisons et intercessions à Dieu par jeusnes, macerations de corps et autres telles sainctes et bonnes dévotions pour sa Santé.'

Brantôme arrived in Spain soon after her recovery, and vividly describes the joy and gratitude of the people at her convalescence. He saw her, he says, go out in her carriage for the first time after her recovery to give thanks to the Virgin of Guadalupe, and asserts that she looked more lovely than ever as she sat at the door of the carriage for the people to see her. She was dressed in white satin covered with silver trimming, her face being uncovered. 'Mais je crois que jamais rien ne fut veu si beau que cette reine, comme je pris l'hardiesse de luy dire.' (Dames Illustres.)

and in rewarding her very numerous servants.[1] This letter is of great interest in showing how truly Philip loved and respected his young wife, and every testimony shows that their affection continued to increase as the time went on, though all around them, both in public and private life, was full of bitterness and anxiety. Don Carlos grew more and more outrageous in his disregard of all decency and respect; and more than one miscarriage of Isabel seemed to threaten the King with the misfortune of a childless marriage.

But what was a source of greater trouble perhaps than anything to Isabel at this period, was the terrible infliction that was scourging her own country. The first war of religion in France had ended with the death of Guise and Anthony of Navarre, and the hollow edict of Amboise had been issued by Catharine, giving toleration to the Huguenots in certain towns. This was a heavy blow to Philip and his cause, and he tried to parry it in his characteristic fashion by the aid of the Guisan party. Jeanne d'Albret and her son (afterwards Henry IV.) had retired to mourn the death of Anthony in their castle of Pau. Henry was heir to the crown of France after Catharine's sons, and his mother was a strict Calvinist, so the Catholic party planned, with Philip's aid, to kidnap Jeanne d'Albret, Queen of Navarre, and her hopeful son, to prevent the danger of a Huguenot ever being king of France. All was arranged for the *coup de main* when the principal conspirator, Captain Dimanche, fell ill in a poor hostelry in Madrid. Isabel had always been accustomed to keep herself well-informed of all cases of trouble amongst her own countrymen in Spain, and

[1] L'Aubépine to Catharine. 'Bibliothèque Nationale,' printed in an appendix to Du Prat's 'Elizabeth de Valois.'

hearing from her servants that a Frenchman was alone and suffering, had him brought from his squalid lodging to the house of one of her servants, to be well cared for by one of her own doctors. Dimanche, in the course of his illness, divulged his conspiracy to his host, who, though a Catholic, was shocked at the wickedness of the plan, and told it to a higher officer, and afterwards to Isabel, who, he knew, was deeply attached to Jeanne d'Albret. The Queen listened to the story with horror, and cried, with tears in her eyes, 'God forbid that such a crime should be committed.' As fast as a confidential courier could gallop went the news from Isabel to her mother; how the Catholic party and Spain were plotting to ruin the house of Navarre, and overthrow the equilibrium in France; and Jeanne d'Albret and her son, also warned by Isabel, escaped from Pau into central France.

Philip probably never knew that it was his wife who had upset so promising a plan; but that her intervention was not from any love of Protestantism is clearly seen by her subsequent action. Her Catholicism, indeed, was more Spanish than French in its character; and that her politic mother should call to her councils at all those whose orthodoxy was doubtful, appeared to her nothing short of abominable, though for a short time after the first Huguenot war, Catharine had managed to bring about an appearance of harmony between the two great French factions. But Condé, the chief of the Bourbons, after Anthony's death, was rough and imperious, and personally disliked by Catharine: Cardinal Lorraine returned to France from the Council of Trent early in 1564, thirsting to revenge the murder of his brother Guise, and soon Catholic intrigue was busy in the French Court.

Isabel wrote to her mother an extraordinary letter at this time (the summer of 1564), evidently inspired by Philip, and forming a part of the Lorraine intrigues to win Catherine to the ultra-catholic party. 'If,' wrote Isabel, 'you will cause Frenchmen to live as good catholics, there is nothing you can ask of my husband that he will not give you. He begs you will not compromise with the evil people, but punish them very severely. If you are afraid because of their great number . . . you may call upon us, and we will give you everything we possess, and troops as well, to support religion. If you do not punish these men yourself, you must not be offended if the King, my husband, listens to the demands of those who crave his help to defend the faith, and gives them what they ask. He is, indeed, obliged to do so, for it touches him more than any one. If France becomes Lutheran, Flanders and Spain will not be far behind.'[1] And so, for page after page of her long letter, Isabel urges her mother to crush the Huguenots for once and for all. Catharine loved intrigue and crooked ways; and, although it was no part of her plan to have only one party in France, she feared the Guises less now that the Duke was dead, and it doubtless seemed to her a good opportunity for drawing closer to Spain, in order to effect the marriage of her daughter Margaret with Don Carlos, and gain some advantage by marriage or otherwise for her darling son Henry (Duke of Orleans).

The effect of Cardinal Lorraine's action was soon seen in the long progress through the east and south of France undertaken by Charles IX. and his mother. Catharine had been trying, ever since the death of

[1] Isabel to Catharine. Bibliothèque Nationale, No. 39, printed in the appendix of Du Prat's 'Elizabeth de Valois.'

Francis II., to arrange an interview with Philip, and bring her personal influence to bear upon him, though he had shown no eagerness to discuss the matter; but now that the Court of France, with Lorraine pulling the wires, was to visit the south, there seemed a chance of effecting at last what the treaty of Cateau Cambresis had failed to do. The Court left Paris in the spring of 1564, and at Nancy, the scheme of Lorraine for a Catholic league to suppress heresy was first broached to Charles IX. He was a mere lad, and was apparently alarmed at the idea; but in the meanwhile, active negotiations were going on to induce Philip and his wife to meet Catharine when she approached the frontier with her son. The French ambassador in Spain was a strong Guisan partisan, and worked hard to bring about the interview, as did Isabel herself, who was sincerely attached to her kinsfolk, and yearned to embrace her mother again. Philip was anxious to forward the formation of a Catholic League, but he distrusted Catharine, and after much negotiation, he consented to Isabel's going as far as Bayonne to greet her mother; the political negotiation, however, being entirely left to the Duke of Alba.

Philip was not enthusiastic, for he knew that Catharine was surrounded by 'politicians,' and he was determined that if nothing came of the interview, it should not be said that he had been deceived. He would not, he said, go to any expense on the occasion, and no gold or silver was to be worn on the dresses on either side: and the Queen was to be kept to the most rigid etiquette in her communications with her mother and brother. She left Madrid with a great train of courtiers in April 1565, bearing with her powers from

her husband to ratify the arrangements that Alba might make. What these arrangements were may be seen by the memorandum given by Philip to Alba for his guidance.[1] The object aimed at was a league, in which each party should be pledged to employ all his force and means to sustain Catholic orthodoxy, to allow no toleration whatever to any other religion, in public or private, and to expel all persons but catholics from the realms, within five months, on pain of death, and forfeiture for them and their abettors, to publish and enforce the decisions of the Council of Trent, to purge all the offices, commands, and services, of every suspicion of heresy, and to deprive of their dignities, titles, and authority, every person not firmly attached to the faith.

With this fateful mission Isabel travelled slowly towards the north, through Burgos, in the spring of 1565. She had in her train more than sixty Spanish nobles with their gaudily garbed followers; and, though Philip's orders with regard to bullion ornaments had been obeyed, there was no lack of costly show. On the 14th May, in a heat so suffocating that many of the soldiers died, Catharine and her son with the French Court rode at early morning out of Saint Jean de Luz, to reach the little river Bidasoa which divides France from Spain. For two hours the royal party rested under a green arbour on the banks, whilst the Spanish baggage was being ferried across; and just as the burning sun was beginning to decline, a burst of trumpets heralded the approach of the Queen of Spain. From the ancient castle of Irun the royal procession could be seen winding down the hill to the shore, Isabel

[1] Archives Nationales, Paris C. K., 1393, quoted in the Introduction of the Spanish Calendar of Elizabeth, edited by Martin Hume.

being borne in a litter. Catharine at once entered her waiting boat, and swift oars brought her to the Spanish side just as her daughter's litter reached the edge. Both Queens were beside themselves with joy. Isabel bent low enough to kiss her mother's knee, but was raised and tenderly embraced, again and again, and then, overcome by their emotions, both Catharine and Isabel burst into tears of joyful excitement, which continued unabated until the boat had landed them on the French bank, where Charles IX. awaited them amidst saluting volleys of musketry.[1]

The pompous rejoicings, the tourneys, comedies, balls, and banquets, which followed at St. Jean de Luz and Bayonne; the splendour with which each Court tried to dazzle the other, and the grave political conferences between Alba and the French ministers and Catharine, cannot be dwelt upon here; but the picture drawn of Isabel herself in the midst of this memorable interview by Brantôme, who was present, is too interesting to omit. 'When she entered Bayonne she rode upon a pony very superbly and richly harnessed with a cloth completely covered with pearls embroidered, which had belonged to the Empress, and was used by her when she entered towns in state; it was said to be worth one hundred thousand crowns and more. She was quite bewitching on horseback, and was worth gazing upon; for she was so lovely and sweet that every one was enchanted. We were all ordered to go and meet her and accompany her on her entrance . . . and she was most gracious to us when we paid our respects to her, and thanked us charmingly. To me, especially, she was kind and

[1] Bibliothèque Nationale, Colbert, vol. 140. 'Bref discours de l'arrivée de la Reine d'Espagne à St. Jehan de Luz.'

cordial; for I had only taken leave of her in Spain four months before, and I was greatly touched that she should thus favour me over my fellows. . . . She was also familiar to the ladies and maids at the Court, exactly the same as before her marriage, and took notice of those who were absent or had got married; and about those who had come to Court since she left she made many inquiries.'

In the discussions with the political ministers it was soon evident to Catharine, as she had probably foreseen from the first, that to throw herself entirely into the hands of the extreme Catholic party as Philip desired, would be disastrous to her, and probably also to her son's throne. But it did not suit her to quarrel with her powerful son-in-law, or to send her daughter back empty-handed to Madrid, after the much heralded interview; so, although an arrangement was signed which ostensibly bound France and Spain together for a religious end, Catharine took care to leave a sufficient number of knotty points open to give her a loophole to escape. When she returned to Paris she soon began to raise difficulties about the ratification, and wrote to her ambassador in Madrid (Fourquevault), 'Je lui dis que en faisant ces mariages, et donnant quelque état à mon fils d'Orleans, qu'il nous falloit tous joindre ensemble: c'est à savoir le Pape, l'Empereur, et ces deux rois, les Allemands et autres que l'on avisera: et que le roi mon fils n'etait pas sans moyens pour aider de sa part, à ce qui serait avisé quand les dits mariages seroient faits, et la dite ligue conclüe.' It will be seen that she makes here so many conditions as to render the league quite impossible. Not only is her daughter Margaret to marry Carlos, and her son Henry a daughter of the Emperor with an independent State,

but all the other Catholic powers are to join the league before France is to be bound to anything.

Indeed, it is clear that the power of the Huguenot and 'politician' nobles in France, and the old jealousy between France and Spain, together with the persecution by the Inquisition of French residents and visitors in Spain, and the massacre in the following year of the French expedition to Florida by Philip's orders, made a sincere co-operation between the two countries in such a league impracticable ;[1] and though appearances were saved at Bayonne, Philip, when he joyfully met his wife after her nineteen days' absence from him, must have known that again his dream of a Catholic league had failed. 'Je ne fis qu'arriver hier (writes the French ambassador to Catharine on Isabel's return) de baiser la main de la reine, la quelle jai trouvée si joieuse et contente de la bonne venue du roy son mari, et de la démonstration de la bonne affection et amitié qu'il lui fait.' Though the personal affection between the husband and wife was without a cloud, it was certain that the political results of the marriage were insignificant. Isabel fought hard for some satisfaction to the outrage to France in Florida, but without result ; Coligny, to her and Philip's indignation, was growing powerful in the French government ; and the second war of religion was seen to be inevitable, whilst the issue was already joined between Philip and his Dutch subjects ; pledged, as they were, to stand together to resist him to the death.

[1] It is usually assumed (and amongst others by Father Florez in 'Reinas Catolicas') that the massacre of St. Bartholomew seven years later (1572) in Paris was arranged at this meeting. There is, however, no proof that such was the case. Philip and the Spanish party, it is true, were loud in their praises of this enormity, but much happened between Bayonne and Bartholomew.

In the midst of these public causes for anxiety Philip was overjoyed to learn that his wife, whose age was nearly twenty-one, was likely to become a mother.[1] The King, as usual, arranged every small detail himself of, 'le régime dont elle devoit user pour conduire son fruit à bon port'; and his demonstrations of affection and pride for his wife, and rejoicing at his hopes for a time, even in public, overcame his natural frigid dignity. Nor was Catharine less delighted, for to her, should the child prove a son, the event was of the highest importance, in view of the growing incapacity of Don Carlos; and she also sent by M. de Saint Etienne a parcel to her daughter: 'Où il y a tout plein de recettes, dont elle peut avoir de besoin'; and she wrote personally to the physician in attendance, urging him to make use of these recipes, which she assured him would do Isabel good.

Every day the smallest incident of the Queen's condition were recounted by courier to her mother; and Philip could hardly tear himself from her side whilst he disposed of his usually beloved business. At length, on the 1st August 1566, a daughter was born, at Balsain, near Segovia, to Philip and Isabel. The child was christened Isabel, after the great Queen and her mother, Clara because she was born on the day of the Saint, and Eugénie, out of gratitude to the efficacious body of St. Eugène—and the sumptuous ceremony of baptism was not allowed to pass without a jealous wrangle between the Archbishop of Santiago and the Bishop of Segovia, as to which should have the honour of performing the rite, which was eventually

[1] Isabel herself ascribed the blessing to her prayers to the body of St. Eugène, which she had with great difficulty persuaded the French to surrender to Spain. It was carried with great pomp from St. Denis to Toledo, and Isabel was constant in her adoration of it.

celebrated by the Nuncio Castaneo, afterwards Pope Urban VII. It would doubtless have been more satisfactory to Philip had a son been born; but his joy and gratitude were nevertheless intense, and the French ambassador, writing to Catharine a few days afterwards, says that when he went to congratulate him, he had him (the ambassador) led to the Queen's room: 'Voulant que je visse la fille qu'il avoit plu Dieu lui donner, de laquelle il est tant aise qu'il ne peut le dissimuler, et l'aime, à ce qu'il dit, pour le présent mieux qu'un fils.' This deep affection for his elder daughter lasted to the King's dying day; and the famous Infanta, designated by him to be in succession Queen of England and France, became by his will sovereign of the Netherlands, and inherited from her father not only the ancient domains of his paternal house but his views, his methods, and his obstinacy.

The Queen lay apparently at the point of death for some days after her delivery, but as soon as her life was safe, the great project, so long discussed, of a voyage of the royal family to insurgent Flanders, was again taken in hand. Philip was for going alone, leaving, it was hoped by Catharine, his wife Regent, though Isabel herself begged hard that she might be allowed to accompany her husband: 'Car vraiment, je serois trop marrie de demeurer par deçà après lui; je ferai ce qui sera en moi qu'il ne m'y laisse point.' There was another who desired as ardently as she to go to Flanders with the King. This was his only son Don Carlos. The young man's frantic excesses had grown more scandalous than ever as he became older. The struggle to obtain his hand in marriage was still going on between the Austrian and French interests;

but Philip continued to put the matter gently aside on the ground of his son's ill-health.

The afflicted father had done his best to wean the Prince from his violence and dissoluteness. He himself had been a dutiful son, ready to sacrifice everything for the task confided to him, and his grief was profound that this son of his youth should openly scandalise his court by his disobedience and insolence to his father and sovereign. Like his great-grandmother, Joan the Mad, the Prince lived in constant revolt against authority, sacred and mundane. His conduct in the Council of State, where his father had placed him to accustom him to business, had shocked every one. Apparently out of sheer wrong-headedness he had openly expressed his sympathy with the Netherlanders, who were defying the will of his father, and he had extorted a semi-promise that he should accompany the King to Flanders. Whether the Prince had entered into any communication with the agents of the Flemings is doubtful; but even if such were the case, and the ambition of Carlos to obtain an early regency of Flanders was the end he had in view, it is a mere travesty of history to represent that he seriously held reformed opinions, any more than did Joan the Mad, when she reviled the mass and the sacred symbols.

In any case, Philip abandoned his intention, if he ever really held it, of going in person to the Low Countries; and decided to send the ruthless Alba with a great army to scourge the stubborn 'beggars' into humble submission to his will. When Carlos heard this, and that he, too, was to remain in Spain, his fury passed all bounds. He attempted to stab Alba himself when he went to take leave; and when the Cortes

of Castile petitioned the King that the heir to the throne should be kept in Spain, Carlos made an open scandal, and threatened the deputies with death.

By this time, the autumn of 1567, Isabel was again pregnant, and Philip's hopes ran high that another son would be born to him. It is clear that the great mission to which he and his father had devoted strenuous lives could not safely be passed on to Carlos; and in September, Ruy Gomez, Philip's only friend, told the French ambassador that if the Queen gave birth to a son, the future of Carlos as heir would have to be reconsidered. The Prince was insatiable for money, which he scattered broadcast on evil doings, he was openly insolent to his father, and the latter suspected a design to escape clandestinely to join the enemies of his State: and there is no doubt that if Isabel's second child had been a son, he would have been placed in the succession before Don Carlos. Philip exceeded himself in tender solicitude for his wife, but at last, on the 17th October 1567, the child that all Europe was breathlessly expecting, was born —another daughter.

Thereafter the romance of Don Carlos unfolded rapidly. Philip had been patient and longsuffering under the affliction of such a son, but he at length despaired, and his attachment to his heir gave place to antipathy and disgust: especially when his physicians had definitely assured him that his line could never be continued by Carlos.[1] The Prince, on the other hand, hated his father bitterly, and was morose with his aunt Joan, whom he formerly loved, and with the young Austrian Princes, though he had

[1] French ambassador Fourquevault to Catharine, June 1567. Bibliothèque Nationale, No. 220 (Du Prat).

now been formally betrothed to their sister Anna. The only person who influenced him was Isabel: 'Il fait semblant de trouver bon tout ce que la reyne votre fille fait et dit, et n'y a personne qui dispose de lui comme elle, et c'est sans artifice ni feinte, car il ne sçait feindre ni dissimuler.'[1]

Matters came to a head at the end of the year 1567. Philip and Isabel had gone to pass Christmas at the newly commenced Palace of the Escorial, when Carlos decided to make his long contemplated attempt to escape from Spain. On the 23rd December, he whispered to his young uncle, Don Juan of Austria, that he needed his help to get horses; and Juan, recognising the seriousness of the situation, at once rode the thirty odd miles to the Escorial to tell the King. As in all his great calamities, Philip remained outwardly unmoved, and though he took such measures secretly as would frustrate the flight, he did not return to Madrid until the day previously fixed, the 17th January 1568. The next day he went with Carlos to mass; but still made no sign. In the interim, the Prince had even attempted to kill Don Juan; and it was time for his father to strike, in order to prevent some greater tragedy, for Carlos had admitted to his confessor that he had an ungovernable impulse to kill a man. Whom? asked the confessor. The King, was the reply. For once Philip broke down utterly when, with Ruy Gomez and other intimate councillors, he deliberated what should be done. Late that night, when the Prince slept, the afflicted father, with five armed gentlemen and twelve guards, obtained entrance into the chamber, in spite of secret bolts and locks; and when the Prince, disturbed, sprang up and sought

[1] *Ibid.*, No. 8.

for his weapons, the weapons were gone. In rage and despair, he tried to strangle himself, but was restrained; and, recognising that he was a helpless prisoner, he flung himself upon his bed in an agony of grief, and sobbed out, 'I am not mad, not mad, only desperate.'

From that hour he was dead to the world, which saw him no more. The position was a humiliating one for Philip, but he made the best of it, by explaining to all the courts that the prince's mental deficiency necessitated his seclusion. To his own nearest relatives he did not hide his bitterness. 'It is not a punishment,' he wrote, 'would to God it were, for it might come to an end: but I never can hope to see my son restored to his right mind again. I have chosen in this matter to sacrifice to God my own flesh and blood, preferring His service and the universal good to all human considerations.' Some sort of trial or examination of the prince was held, but all professed accounts of the proceedings must be accepted with caution. Certain it is that they dragged on wearily, whilst the charges of treason, of conspiracy, of disloyalty, and perhaps of heresy, were laboriously examined in strict secresy. Neither Isabel nor his aunt Joan was allowed to see Carlos, and Don Juan was forbidden even to wear mourning for the calamity. By all accounts the prince's malady grew rapidly worse, as well it might in such circumstances. Like Joan the Mad before him, he would starve for days, and then swallow inedible things, he would alternately roast and freeze himself, and he attempted suicide more than once. The end came on the 25th July 1568, and the immense weight of testimony is in favour of his having died in consequence of his own mad fancies in diet and hygiene.

When Fourquevault conveyed the news of Carlos's

death to Catharine, he wrote that the Queen Isabel was suffering from fainting fits and headache; but it was her wish that great signs of mourning should be made for the Prince in France, to show the King of Spain that they (*i.e.*, the French) were sorry for his loss; 'as the Spanish people attach so much importance to appearances.' Isabel in weak health, for she was again pregnant, was deeply touched by the trouble around her. The French ambassador was gleefully reminding her mother that the death of Don Carlos was a very good thing for her, and praising her beauty, which the deep Spanish mourning set off to advantage, whilst he indulged in brilliant hopes for the birth of a son to Isabel. But the young Queen's heart was heavy, not for Carlos alone, but for the scenes of horror which were flooding Flanders with blood under the flail of Alba. Egmont and Horn had been treacherously sacrificed in Brussels, Montigny in Spain, and her own dear France was reft in twain by fratricidal war. She was a catholic as sincere as Philip himself, but that the faith should need wholesale murder for its assertion shocked and frightened her; and she languished in the atmosphere of gloomy determination which surrounded Philip.

Catharine wrote often in reply to the depressing news from her daughter, arousing her hopes for a son who should, in his time, put all things right; but Isabel at twenty-three had lost her gay elasticity, and the advance of her pregnancy meant the advance of her exhausting malady. Philip, as usual, was tenderly solicitous for her ease and happiness; full of hope, too, that a son at last was to be born to him, for upon this everything depended. The lying stories which long afterwards the traitor Antonio Perez wove with hellish

skill in the safe refuge of Essex House, accusing Philip of jealousy of his wife with Don Carlos, and subsequently with one Pozzo, are hardly worth more credit now than the sentimental romance of the Abbé de St. Real about her love for Carlos. Perez, whose only wish was to blacken Philip indelibly to please his enemies, and his own paymasters in England and France, hints that Philip himself connived at his beloved wife's murder by poison: but even if the confidential letters of her French friends now before us did not disprove this, the fact that nothing could be so unfortunate for Philip's policy as Isabel's death would give it the lie.

Isabel had been suffering for months from heart failure and bodily irregularities; and on the 3rd October 1568, the violent remedies administered to her by her doctors caused a miscarriage. The poor Queen knew that she was doomed, for when before daybreak Philip, heartbroken, came and sat by her bed, she calmly took a last farewell of him, praying him to be good to their two little girls, to be friendly with Catharine and King Charles IX., and kind to the attendant ladies who had served her so well: 'with other words worthy of admiration, and fit to break the heart of a good husband, such as the King was. He answered her in the same way; for he could not believe that she was so near her end, and promised all she asked him; after which he retired to his room in great anguish, as I am told.'[1] The dying woman had confessed and received extreme unction during the night; and early in the morning the French ambassadors were summoned to her chamber. 'She knew us at once, and said, Ah! ambassador, you see me well on

[1] Fourquevault to Catharine, 3rd October 1568. Du Prat.

the road out of this unhappy world into a better one . . . pray my mother and brother to bear my loss patiently, and to be satisfied with what pleases me more than any prosperity I have enjoyed in this world, to go to my Creator, where I may serve him better than I can here. I shall pray Him that all my brothers and sisters may live long and happily, as well as my mother and brother Charles: and I beg you to beseech them to look to their realm, and prevent heresy taking root. Let them all take my death patiently, for I am very happy.' 'O!' replied the principal ambassador, 'your Majesty will live a long time yet, to see France good and happy.' 'No, no, ambassador,' she whispered, shaking her head with a faint smile. 'I do hope it will be so, but I do not wish to see it. I would much rather go and see what I hope very soon to see.'

After much more tender talk of her own land and people, the dying Queen took farewell of her countrymen and prayed awhile with her ghostly comforters: then fell into slumber for a short ten minutes. At midday, 'she suddenly opened her eyes, bright and sparkling, and it seemed to me as if she wished to tell me something more, for they looked straight at me:[1] and then Isabel of the Peace passed quietly into the world her gentle soul longed for. 'We left the palace all in tears, for throughout the people of this city there is not one, great or small, that doth not weep; for they all mourn in her the best Queen they have ever had.' Philip in grief hid himself from the world in the monastery of Saint Jerome; but his task in the world was greater to him even than his sorrow or his love. The hopes of the French alliance to extirpate heresy had failed, failed utterly and completely. Eng-

[1] Forquevault to Catharine, 3rd October 1568. Du Prat.

land, helping the insurgent Flemings with all her might, had drifted further, and ever further, away from him. In France the reformation was growing, and only two lives—and bad ones—stood between the throne and a Huguenot King. There was no male heir to inherit the thorny inheritance of championing orthodox Christianity throughout the world. Whither could Philip turn for sympathy and a mother for the heir he yearned for? Not to England; not to France, for both had failed him. Where but to his own kin in Austria; to his niece Anna, the betrothed of his dead son Carlos: and on the second anniversary of Isabel's death Anna of Austria landed in Spain to marry her uncle Philip. Isabel of the Peace politically had lived in vain.

BOOK IV

I

ISABEL OF BOURBON

BOOK IV

THE niece wife of Philip II. bore him many children, of whom one weakling alone survived to inherit the oppressive crown of his father. Anna was a homely, devout soul, submissive and obedient to her husband, ever busy with her needle and her household cares; and, like the other members of her house, overpowered with the vastness and majesty of the mission confided by heaven to its chief.[1] On the voyage to Portugal in 1580 Philip fell ill at Badajoz, and when his life was despaired of Anna fervently prayed that he might be saved, even if she had to be sacrificed instead. Her prayer was heard; and as the husband of fifty-three recovered the wife of thirty sickened and died, leaving Philip broken and lonely to live the rest of his weary life for his work alone. The struggle to prevent the victory of reform in France, which occupied Philip's later years, and consummated the ruin of his country, rendered impossible a renewal of the idea of a French and Spanish coalition, except, indeed,

[1] Father Florez tells of her that on one occasion she was brought to death's door by her loathing her food; and as all mundane remedies had been tried in vain, the King sent for the blessed friar Orozco. The friar told the Queen he had a remedy recommended by his grandmother which would cure her if she would take it. The Queen consented, and the friar cooked a partridge and bacon before her, reciting verses of the Magnificat at each turn of the spit. When the dish was ready he took it to the Queen and said, 'Eat, my lady, in the name of God, for the mere smell of this would make a dead man hungry.' Needless to say, Anna ate and was cured.

by the conquest of France by Philip, which many years of fruitless war proved to be impossible, whilst the gallant cynic, Henry of Navarre, could hold up the national banner of France as a rally point against the foreign invader.

Once Philip, in sheer despair, turned, when it was too late, to England again in the hope of bringing it into his system by force, if intrigue and subornation of conspiracy and murder failed: but with the defeat of the Armada that hope fled too; and again there was no possible bride but an Austrian cousin for Philip's heir, Philip III., and no feasible policy from Philip's point of view but a continuance of the close family alliance with the German Habsburg descendants of Joan the Mad. The Emperor, it is true, was forced to tolerate his Lutheran princes; but he and his house made common cause with the Philips when the French cast greedy eyes towards Catholic Flanders or Italy. Margaret of Austria brought to sickly, scrofulous Philip III. an anæmic body and a stunted mind to rear his children. She implored her mother passionately to save her from the terrifying honour of sharing the gloomy throne of her cousin, for in her Styrian home she lived the life of a nun, devoted only to the humble care of the poor and sick of her own land: but she was sternly told that all must be sacrificed to the supreme duty that was hers; and thenceforward she, too, lived in the awe-stricken atmosphere of religious abnegation, which was the mark of her Spanish kindred.[1] In besotted, conventual devotion, and frivolous trifling in turns, her monkish husband and she passed their lives;

[1] She was much beloved, especially in Madrid, and died in childbed at the Escorial in 1611.

their children, of whom they had several, all bloodless decadents of low vitality, with big mumbling jaws and lack-lustre eyes, brought up in the same pathetic tradition that to them and Spain — poor, ruined, desolated Spain now—was confided the sacred duty and honour of upholding religious orthodoxy throughout the world at any cost or sacrifice.

So long as Henry IV. was King of France, even though he had 'gone to mass,' the close union with Spain was impossible: but on the fateful day in May 1610 when, in the narrow Paris lane, the dagger of Ravaillac pierced the heart of the great 'Béarnais,' all was changed. The Queen-Regent of France was one of the Papal Medici, imbued, as they all were, with the tradition of Spain's orthodoxy and overwhelming might. Her marriage with Henry had been a victory for the extreme Catholic party in Europe; but so long as Henry lived he had prevented violent reaction. Now that he was gone, with his Huguenot traditions, France and Spain, it was thought, might again be joined in a Catholic league, and together impose their form of faith upon the world, either by armed force or political pressure. It was a foolish, impracticable plan, for Frenchmen were too far advanced now to be used to play the game of impotent bankrupt Spain, powerful only in its pride and its traditions.

But James I. of England had been toadying and humiliating himself to gain Philip's aid in favour of his son-in-law, the Palatine in Germany, and it doubtless seemed a good stroke of policy on the part of France and Spain to leave him and the Lutherans isolated. In any case no time was lost, and before Henry IV. had lain in his tomb at St. Denis a year

it was agreed that the Spanish Infanta, Anna, should marry Louis XIII. of France, and that Isabel, or Elizabeth, the eldest daughter of Henry IV. and Marie de Medici, should become the wife of Philip, Prince of Asturias, the son and heir of the Spanish King. All the betrothed were children of tender age, and it was agreed that the exchange of brides should be deferred until the Infanta was twelve years old (1613). Pompous and lavish embassies went through the solemn farce of paying honour to the girl-children respectively as Queen of France and Princess of Asturias. The Duke of Mayenne, of the house of Guise, ruffled and swaggered in Madrid with a marriage embassy so splendid in 1612, that the cost of entertaining him beggared the capital for years; and so keen was the emulation in sumptuousness of dress and adornments during the interminable festivities in Madrid to celebrate the double betrothals, that the Spanish nobles came to dagger-thrusts on the subject in the palace itself.

In Paris Ruy Gomez's son, the Duke of Pastrana, paid similar court to the dark-haired girl of nine who was betrothed to young Philip, heir of Spain, two years younger. Three years more had to pass, notwithstanding the impatience of the French, before the backward little Infanta Anna, in October 1615, was conveyed with a pomp and extravagance that ill matched the penury of her father's realm, to the frontier of France, there to be exchanged for Isabel of Bourbon, her brother's bride.[1] On the 9th November 1615 all the chivalry of France and Spain

[1] An interminable account of the splendours of the occasion, for which the favourite Duke of Lerma was mainly responsible, will be found in Documentos Ineditos,' lxi.

were once more assembled on either bank of the little stream of Bidasoa that separated the two countries. Wasteful luxury and vain magnificence had been squandered wantonly by the Spanish nobles, determined, as usual, to put the French to shame. At Behovia, the point where the ceremony was to take place, sumptuous banqueting-halls had been erected upon rafts moored on each side of the stream, whilst in mid-current another raft supported a splendid pavilion covered with velvet and cloth of gold, and carpeted with priceless silken carpets from the East. Here the Duke of Guise delivered Isabel of France to the Duke of Uceda, in exchange for Anna of Austria, thenceforward Queen of France. The romantic and turbulent career of the latter is related elsewhere: here we have to follow the fortunes of the beautiful dark-haired girl of twelve who, like Isabel of the Peace fifty-four years before, turned her back upon her native land to cement the Catholic alliance between France and Spain.[1]

The circumstances were widely different, for the battle of religious liberty in Europe was practically won, though the blind faith and vanity of Philip III. refused, even now, to recognise the fact, or his own poverty-stricken impotence. The Medici Queen-Regent of France, moreover, was a very different person from her kinswoman Catharine. She was not playing her own game so much as that of the cunning Italians who directed her, and it was soon evident, under Richelieu, that Frenchmen were no longer to be made the playthings of foreign ambitions. Isabel,

[1] To show how uncertain were still the relations between the people of the two countries, it may be mentioned that an eyewitness of the ceremonies of the exchange, etc., mentions as a marvellous thing that there was no fighting between Spaniards and Frenchmen.

child as she was, had a stout heart and a high spirit, as befitted her father's daughter. She was willing enough to be a queen upon the most pretentious throne in Europe; but she was not made for martyrdom, and, as we shall see, her marriage was even less influential in securing lasting peace and co-operation between France and Spain than that of the previous Isabel had been.

Through Fuenterrabia, San Sebastian and Vitoria, Isabel travelled towards Burgos, where she was to meet her boy bridegroom. Dressed in Spanish garb from Vitoria onward, she won all hearts by her gaiety and brightness; and, as an eyewitness says of her, 'even if she had French blood in her veins she had a Spanish spirit.' Philip III. and his son met the bride a league from Burgos, and we are told that the prince of eleven years old was so dazzled with her beauty that he could only gaze speechless upon her. The next day Burgos was all alive with the splendour of the welcome of the future Queen, who entered the city on a white palfrey with a silver saddle and housings of velvet and pearls; and so, from city to city, smiling and happy, the girl, in the midst of the inflated Court, slowly made her way to Madrid. On the afternoon of 19th December 1615 Isabel rode from the monastery of St. Jerome[1] through Madrid to the palace upon the cliff overlooking the valley of the Manzanares. An eyewitness describes her appearance as she rode through the mile of crowded narrow streets of old Madrid, under triumphal arches, past thousands of peopled balconies, hung

[1] The only portion of this building now standing is the ancient Gothic church where King Alfonso and Queen Victoria Eugénie were recently married. It stands close to the famous picture gallery in the Prado.

with tapestries, with songs and music of welcome all the way. 'Her Highness was dressed in the French fashion, with an entire robe of crimson satin embroidered with bugles, a little cap trimmed with diamonds, and a ruff beautifully trimmed in French style, and with a rosette and girdle of diamonds of great size. She went her way, bright and buxom, full of rejoicing. Her aquiline face was wreathed in smiles, and her fine eyes flashed from side to side, looking at everything, to the great delight of the populace.'[1]

It was five years after this, on the 25th November 1620, at the palace of Pardo, that young Philip and Isabel began their married life together. Philip was yet barely sixteen when (in March 1621) the low vitality of his father flickered out, and the monarch, who should have been a monk, passed, in alternate paroxysms of fear and ecstacies of hope, from the world in which he had meant so well and done so ill. The corruption and waste under Lerma and his crew of parasites had bled Spain to the white, and utter ruin was now the lot of whole populations. The tradition of the King's wealth which still lingered could hardly be kept up now, though at the fall of Lerma some of the worst robbers had been made to disgorge their booty. The King had been beloved and revered for his saintliness, but all saw the desolation that his idle dependence upon favourites had caused. Spain now looked only to the sallow, long-faced boy, Philip IV., with the light blue eyes and lank flaxen hair, to save the people from starvation. Not to him, but to the man at his side, it soon learned to look. He was a big-boned powerful man of thirty-

[1] From an unpublished MS. in the British Museum. Add. 10,236.

three, with a great square head, heavy stooping shoulders, fierce black eyes, burning like live coals in an olive face; and his upturned twisted moustache added to the haughty imperiousness of his mien. This was the man, Gaspar de Guzman, Count of Olivares, Duke of St. Lucar, who made a clean sweep of all the corrupt gang that had fattened upon Spain, the brood of Rojas and Sandoval, and replaced them with his own creatures. Philip, like his father, meant well, and was naturally a much more able man; but he was idle, pleasure-loving, and pathetically unable to resist temptation, each constantly recurring transgression being followed by an agony of remorse, only to be again committed when the first poignancy of regret had passed.

Following the advice of Olivares, he attempted to mend matters by cutting down expenses alone, instead of changing the system of taxation and finance; and the 'spirited foreign policy' which he adopted soon involved him in expenditure, which later completed the downfall of the country. The foolish old dream that catholic unity might be won by Spanish arms still kept him at war with the Dutch, whilst the Moors were harrying the Spanish coasts and commerce, and France and Spain were already at loggerheads again, now that Marie de Medici and her crew had been thrust into the background. Instead of recognising facts and lying low to recuperate, Olivares and Philip, with the blinded nation behind them, were as boastful and haughty as their predecessors had been in the days of Spain's strength. The weak poltroon who reigned unworthily in England, was ever ready to truckle to apparent strength. He had sacrificed Raleigh at Spain's bidding, he had been contemptu-

ously used and scorned by Lerma and Philip III. when he had tried to marry his heir to a Spanish Infanta, and he had been cleverly kept from an alliance with France by hopes and half promises. But the Palatinate was still unrestored, and when Philip III. had died, James made another attempt with the new King to win Spain's friendship by a marriage.

The hare-brained trip of Prince Charles and Buckingham to Madrid, to win the hand of the Infanta and the alliance of Spain, has often been described, and can hardly be touched upon here. The Prince suddenly appeared disguised at the English embassy at Madrid on the 7th March 1622, and the next day, to the dismay of Olivares, the awkward visit was known to all the capital. He and young Philip made the best of a bad business. To abandon Austria and the Palatinate for the sake of protestant England did not suit them, but they could be polite. All the edicts ordering economy of dress, eating, and adornments, were suspended, and whilst Charles stayed in Madrid a tempest of prodigality prevailed. Isabel and the Infanta played their parts in the farce with apprehension and reluctance, for the former knew that the besought alliance was directed against France, and the Infanta was horrified at the idea of marrying a heretic. But they did their best to keep up appearances, especially Isabel, who treated Charles most graciously. The day after his arrival, Philip and his wife and sister, the latter with a blue ribbon round her arm to distinguish her, road in a coach to the church in the Prado, and Charles, of course quite by accident, met them both coming and going, to his great satisfaction. Soon after Isabel sent to the English prince a fine present of white underwear, a nightgown beautifully

worked, and several scented coffers, with golden keys, full of toilet requisites, probably guessing that in his rapid voyage he had not brought such luxuries with him; and at the great bull fight at the Plaza Mayor in honour of the Prince, she sat in brown satin, bordered with gold, in the fine balcony of the city breadstore overlooking the Plaza, as Charles, in black velvet and white feathers, rode his fine bay horse into the arena by the side of Philip, to take his place in an adjoining box.

Before the masked ball on Easter Sunday, given by the Admiral of Castile in Charles's honour, Isabel in white satin, covered with precious stones, dined in public; and then, changing her dress to one of black and gold, awaited the English Prince to lead her to the ballroom. There during the entertainment, and on all other occasions, he sat at her right hand under a royal canopy, with Philip on her left; whilst the Earl of Bristol, on his knees before them, interpreted the small talk suitable to the occasion. And so, with comedies and cane tourneys, banquets and balls, Charles and Buckingham were beguiled by Olivares for well nigh six months, until the farce grew stale, and Charles wended his way home again, nominally betrothed to the Infanta, but really outwitted and his country humiliated. The defeat was softened by much loving profession and splendid presents from Philip and his courtiers to the English Prince; and it is somewhat curious that, on the departure of Charles, the present given to him by Isabel again took the form of white linen garments, fifty amber-dressed skins, two hundred and fifty scented kidskins for gloves, a large sum in silver crowns, and other things.[1]

[1] From MSS. of Diego de Soto, de Aguilar Royal Academy of History, Madrid, G. 32, and another in British Museum, Add. 10,236.

Philip and his wife had now settled down to their regular life in the most brilliant court in Europe. It was the Augustan age of Spanish literature and the drama, and a perfect craze for comedies and satirical verse seized upon the Spanish people, under the influence of the King and Queen, both of them passionately fond of the theatre and diversions of all sorts. Isabel, like her husband, was conventionally devout, and her religious benefactions were constant, as well as her attendances at the ceremonies of the church;[1] but in her devotion she had none of the gloomy monastic character which had afflicted her husband's family, and the social demeanour of the courtiers and of the townspeople generally underwent a complete change in her time. Her manners, indeed, were so free and debonair as to have given rise to some quite unsupported scandal as to her faithfulness to her husband. Madrid was a perfect hotbed of tittle-tattle; everybody considered it necessary to be able to spin satirical verses, and as these were generally anonymous and in manuscript, the reputation of no one, high or low, was safe from attack.

The reaction from the rigid propriety of previous reigns led the Court of Philip IV. to assume a licence

[1] Father Florez and other ecclesiastical writers give many instances of her liberality in contributing to pious works, and in Reinas Catolicas there is an account of Isabel's action at the time (in 1624), that a 'heretic had outraged the Most Holy Sacrament in this my convent of St. Philip.' In addition to the services of atonement for the outrage in all the churches, 'the royal family made such an atonement as never was seen, as befitted an insult to the greatest of the mysteries. The corridors of the palace were adorned with all the valuable and beautiful possessions of the crown, and a separate altar was erected in the name of each royal personage. That of the Queen attracted the attenion of all beholders for the taste it exhibited, and the immense value of the jewels that adorned it belonging to her Majesty. The value of these jewels was computed at three million and a half' (of reals).

that quite shocked foreigners. Much of the day was passed in parading up and down the Calle Mayor (High Street) in coaches, and much of the night in summer in promenading in the dry bed of the river. Gallantry became the fashion, and ladies, very far from resenting, welcomed broad compliments and doubtful jests addressed to them by strangers in the streets.[1] The palace itself, especially the new pleasure palace of the Buen Retiro, built in the Prado for Philip by Olivares in 1632, was a notorious focus of intrigue; encouraged by the example of Philip himself, by far the most dissolute king of his line. From his early youth he had delighted in amateur acting, and under a pseudonym (Un Ingenio de esta Corte), wrote comedies himself, and delighted in the society of dramatic people.

Isabel was as keen a lover of the stage as her husband, and from the first days after the mourning for Philip III. was over, she began her favourite diversion of private theatricals in her own apartments. From October 1622, every Sunday and Thursday during the winter, as well as on holidays, comedies were performed by regular actors in her private theatre. Some of these comedies may be mentioned to show the taste of the Queen in such matters. '*The Scorned Sweetheart*,' '*The Loss of Spain*,' and '*The Jealousy of a Horse*,' were three plays by Pedro Valdés, for which Isabel paid 300 reals (£6) each, the previous price having been £4. '*Gaining Friends*,' '*The Power of Opportunity*,' and '*How our Eyes are Cheated*,' '*The Fortunate Farmer*,' '*The Woman's Avenger*,' and '*The Husband of His Sister*,' were others; and the total

[1] 'Voyage d'Espagne.' Aersens van Sommerdyk, and many other visitors to Spain at the time testify to this. See also 'Relatione dell' Ambasciatore di Venetia.' British Museum MSS., Add. 8,701.

number of such plays represented in the Queen's apartments in the palace during the winter of 1622–23, was forty-three, the fees for which reached 13,500 reals (£270).[1]

Whilst the Prince of Wales was in Madrid the theatres in the palace, and the two public courtyard theatres in the capital, had a busy season. James Howell, writing from Madrid at the time,[2] says, 'There are many excellent poems made here since the Prince's arrival, which are too long to couch in a letter. Yet I will venture to send you this one stanza of Lope de Vega:

"Carlos Estuardo soy,
Que, siendo amor mi guia,
Al cielo de España voy,
Por ver mi estrella Maria."

"Charles Stuart here am I
Guided by love afar,
Into the Spanish sky
To see Maria my star."

'There are comedians once a week come to the palace, where, under a great canopy, the Queen and the Infanta sit in the middle, our Princeps and Don Carlos on the Queen's right hand, the King and the little Cardinal (*i.e.* the King's boy-brother, Ferdinand) on the Infanta's left hand.'

Philip's notorious and scandalous infidelity to his wife, to whom, nevertheless, he was devotedly attached, did not prevent him from being violently jealous of any appearance of special loving homage to her beauty and charm. At one of the great cane tourneys to celebrate his accession in the summer of 1621, it was

[1] Historia del Arte Dramatico en España (translated from the German of A. F. Schack).

[2] Howell's 'Familiar Letters.'

noticed that when Juan de Tassis, Count of Villamediana, rode with his troop of horsemen into the arena, he was wearing a sash covered with the silver coins called *reales* (royals), and flaunting as his motto, 'My loves are reals' (or royal). The Count was a spiteful poetaster, neither good looking nor young, but boastful and presumptuous; and the quidnuncs of the capital who flocked Liar's parade,'[1] began to whisper that this was a challenge to the love of the Queen; and that the King, when his wife had remarked that Villamediana aimed well, had replied, 'Yes, but he aims too high.' It is now fairly certain that Villamediana's homage was not intended for the Queen, but for another lady, named Francisca de Tavara, with whom the King was carrying on an intrigue at the time;[2] and beyond her usual jovial heartiness there is no ground for supposing that Isabel gave Villamediana any encouragement.

But in the following spring of 1622, when the Court was at Aranjuez, a far more serious matter happened which produced tragic results for Villamediana. There was a great festival to celebrate Philip's seventeenth birthday, and one of the attractions was a temporary theatre of canvas and wood erected in the 'island garden,' and beautifully adorned, in which was to be represented at night a comedy in verse written by the Count of Villamediana, and dedicated to the Queen. The comedy was called '*La Gloria de Niquea*,' and Isabel was to represent the part of the goddess of beauty. All the Court was assembled, the King being in his seat with his brothers and sister, and the Queen

[1] The steps of the Church of St. Philip in the Calle Mayor was so called *El Mentidero.*

[2] Speech (published) by Don Eugenio Hartzenbusch to the Royal Academy of History, Madrid, 1861, where the whole question is discussed.

in the retiring rooms behind the stage. The inside of the flimsy building was of course lit brilliantly with wax candles and lamps, whilst in the densely wooded gardens outside all was dark, when suddenly, at the moment that the prologue had been finished, a cry went up from behind the curtain: and then a long tongue of flame licked up the side, and immediately the whole of the stage was aflame. Panic seized upon the gaily bedizened crowd, and there was a rush to escape. In the confusion the King with difficulty found his way out, only to rush to the back of the edifice in search of his wife. Villamediana had been before him, and Philip found his wife half fainting in the Count's arms.

Whatever may be the truth of the matter, it was soon noised about by the scandalmongers of Madrid that Villamediana had planned the whole affair, and had purposely set fire to the place that he might have an excuse for clasping the Queen in his arms. This was on the 8th April 1622; and when, in August of the same year, Villamediana was assassinated in his coach at nightfall in the Calle Mayor, within a few yards of his own house,[1] all fingers pointed to Philip himself as the instigator of the crime; and the current jingle ascribed to Lope de Vega, in which it says that '*el impulso fué soberano*' echoed public opinion on the matter. No blame, however, in any case can be ascribed to Isabel, nor did Philip ever cease to hold her in affection and esteem.

She was a true daughter of her father, sage in counsel, bold in action, but with a gaiety of heart that often made her pleasures look frivolous and unbecoming.

[1] The house now belonging to Count Oñate, just out of the Puerta del Sol.

More Spanish than the Spaniards, she loved the bull-fight and the theatre with an intensity that delighted her husband's subjects, who were crazy for both pastimes, but in her boisterous vitality she would often countenance amusements contrived for her which we should now think coarse. Quarrels and fights between country women would be incited, or nocturnal tumults by torchlight in the gardens of Aranjuez or the Retiro, arranged for her to witness; snakes or other noxious reptiles would be secretly set loose on the floor of a crowded theatre to the confusion of the spectators, whilst the Queen almost laughed herself into a fit, at one of the windows overlooking the scene. The Court indeed during the first years of her married life was a merry one, notwithstanding its ostentatious devotion; and, although Olivares more than once urged the King to take a more active interest in the government and give less time to his amusements, the minister's enemies, and he had many, averred that there was nothing he really liked better than to keep the young monarch immersed in pleasure, that he himself might rule supreme.[1]

Much as Isabel herself loved pleasure, she began to be anxious, as troubles at home and abroad accumulated, at the complete abandonment of public affairs to the minister, and she urged Philip most earnestly to give more time to his duties. She had good reason to be distrustful, for she saw how weak to resist his impulses Philip was. His love affairs were legion, and as in the case of most of his courtiers, gallantry became a habit with him. There was, however, one

[1] It is certain that Olivares urged Philip most fervently to attend to business in the early years of his reign. See my chapter on Philip IV. in 'The Cambridge Modern History,' vol. iv., for a letter on the subject from Philip.

affair of Philip's that gave his wife more disquietude than most of the others. Olivares, it was said, in pursuance of his system, had agents all over Spain to send to Madrid the most talented actors and attractive actresses that could be found; and in 1627 there appeared as a member of a very clever troupe at the 'Corral de la Pacheca' [1] a girl of sixteen named Maria Calderon. She was no great beauty, but of extraordinary grace and fascination, with a voice so sweet, and speech so captivating, that she subdued all hearts. Philip saw her on the stage, and fell in love with her at onec. She was summoned to the room overlooking the courtyard that served the King for a private box, in order that he might listen more closely to the cadence of her lovely voice, and the inflammable heart of Philip grew warmer still. From the Corral to the palace was but a step when the king willed it, and the 'Calderona' became Philip's acknowledged mistress. Gifts and caresses were piled upon her by the lovelorn King; and the Calderona, proud of her position, turned a severe face to all other lovers, needing, as she said, no favour but royal favour.

On the 17th April 1629 she had a son by the King, to the great delight of Philip. The child Juan of Austria was the handsomest member of his house, and Philip's affection for him from the first was intense; somewhat to Isabel's chagrin when she herself bore him a son six months afterwards.[2] But from the worthy 'Calderona' she had no more rivalry to fear. As soon as the actress could go out she sought the King, and, throwing herself at his feet, craved per-

[1] On the site of the present Teatro español in the Plaza de Sant Ana.

[2] Philip had had a son by another lady high at Court three years before this, in 1626, of whom an account from unpublished sources will be found in 'The Year after the Armada,' etc., by Martin Hume.

mission, humbly and tearfully, to devote the rest of her life to religion in a convent, now that she had been honoured by bearing a son to the King. Philip loved her still and hesitated, but she firmly refused to cohabit with him again; and with sorrow he gave way, and the Calderona became a nun.[1]

Isabel's children were many, five who died at, or soon after, their births having preceded the looked-for heir of Spain, Don Baltasar Carlos, that chubby, sturdy little Prince (born in October 1629) who prances his fat pony for ever upon the canvas of Velazquez. The fastuous taste of the King and Court was satisfied to the full in the baptism of Baltasar Carlos. The Countess of Olivares, who was as supreme in the palace as her husband was in the country, held the babe at the font, seated, as we are told by an eyewitness, upon 'a seat of rock crystal, the most costly piece of furniture ever seen in Europe'; and presents were showered upon the midwife to the value of thirteen thousand ducats. As soon as the Queen was able to appear, her birthday (21st November) was celebrated on this occasion as it had never been before. Masquerades on horseback, torchlight parades, cane contests and bullfights succeeded each other, in all of which the King made a sumptuous appearance with his brother, Don Carlos; and the Queen, who had given an heir to the crown, was honoured to the full.

This splendid Court, strutting and posturing in rich garments upon the brink of the slope which was leading to Spain's overthrow, had the advantage of being immortalised upon canvas by the greatest master of portraiture that ever lived, and laid bare to the very

[1] From an unpublished contemporary account in Italian. B. M. Add. 8,703.

soul by some of the keenest satirists who ever wielded pen. The battue parties, in which Philip and his wife delighted, for the killing of stags in an enclosure, are brought before us as if we were present by the great picture in which Velazquez has portrayed the scene.[1] In the park of Aranjuez, with the afternoon sun glinting through the trees, dark against a cloudless sky, the white canvas enclosure is erected. Into its gradually narrowing limits the frightened deer have been driven by mounted beaters, and at the only exit through the neck of the funnel are stationed the gentlemen, beneath a sort of platform of leafy boughs decked with red cloth, in which the ladies sit. The central figure of the twelve ladies, seated upon a crimson cushion, the better to see the sport, is the Queen, Isabel of Bourbon, dressed in a yellow robe, and wearing a white bow upon her head. Beneath the platform there await, mounted, the onrush of the deer, Philip and his two brothers, Carlos and Ferdinand, and, of course, Olivares. With their hunting knives, they slash at the deer as they fly past underneath the ladies' bower, killing some, ham-stringing others, and leaving the rest that escape to be dealt with by the hounds awaiting them beyond. The ground beneath the bower is drenched with the warm blood of the butchered beasts, and the ladies smile approval at the sickly spectacle, whilst groups of courtiers, servants, and beaters, crowd the foreground and discuss the King's prowess.

Another hunting scene, a little less repugnant to modern ideas, is the famous 'Boar Hunt' in the National Gallery in London. Here the canvas enclosure is in the hunting seat of the Pardo, and Philip,

[1] Ashburton Collection.

on his prancing mount, is just thrusting his forked javelin into the flank of a passing boar, whilst around him are his courtiers and companions in the sport, with Olivares nearest; and in the arena there are some clumsy blue carriages, with partially curtained windows innocent of glass except in front, in one of which sits Queen Isabel. The mules of her coach have, of course, been unharnessed and put out of harm's way; but as the boars are agile and fierce, and had been known to leap into the coaches, the ladies themselves are armed with light javelins to repel them. Every detail of the life of this pleasure-loving Court has been fixed for us by the great painter: the ladies and gentlemen in the garb in which they lived, the dwarfs and buffoons who amused them, the palaces in which they intrigued; and, as a running accompaniment always, the sated weary face of the King from youth to age.

Fair and lymphatic, with dull blue eyes, and colourless sallow face, Philip had inherited the tradition that in all public appearances the King of Spain must never smile: and, mad votary of pleasure as he was, he never moved a muscle either in delight or annoyance whilst he was behind the footlights. Isabel was more spontaneous, and Spanish etiquette never crushed her. But as time went on and the clouds piled up for the coming tempest, her face grew heavier and her eyes more sad. Her portrait was painted many times by Valazquez, though only one specimen remains in the Museo del Prado, the equestrian figure, painted at about the time of Baltasar's birth before misfortune had spoilt her life. Another likeness of her, now at Hampton Court, was painted ten years later (1638), shows the change wrought by trouble: but in all



ISABEL OF BOURBON.

After a Painting by Velazquez.

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Velazquez's representations of the Queen, we see the same characteristics: the large, expressive black eyes, the broad spacious forehead, and the strong full jaw; and, though the general aspect was more like her buxom mother than her clever father, Isabel's countenance is alive with intelligence. In the later portraits the face grows weary, and the lower part is flaccid and heavy, but in all the painted portraits of Isabel by Velazquez, we have the woman herself before us; not a sensuous idealisation of her, like that painted by Rubens, and now at the Louvre.

If the painter has handed to us by his genius the exact reflection of this Court in a way that makes it live for us more vividly, perhaps, than any other, Quevedo and his followers, especially Velez de Guevara in *El Diablo Cojuelo*, have left in biting prose records no less faithful of its amusements, its follies, and crimes. By the light held up by the satirists we see an utterly decadent society, sunk, from the King downwards, into a slough of apathetic despondency of ever bettering things, whilst each individual strives madly to get as much pleasure as he can wring out of life, by fair means or foul, before the catastrophe overwhelms them all. Faith has decayed, and trembling superstition mixed with scoffing irreverence has taken its place: idleness is everywhere; poverty and squalor seek to masquerade as nobility, in order to claim the privilege to plunder which Court and Church alone possess, and labour is scorned as beneath the subjects of a King so wealthy and powerful as the sovereign of Spain is still assumed to be, in the face of all evidence to the contrary. A pretentious, hollow society it was, where all sought to share in the scramble, even at second or third hand, for the possessions of the State, oblivious

to the fact that the State itself could possess nothing but what the individual citizens supplied.

Pretence was not limited to rank and material possessions. The noble poet and satirist kept a sycophantic man of letters to supply him with the lucubrations that moved the Court to admiration when they bore the name of a marquis, the cities swarmed with sham students, who pattered Latin tags, and cadged on the strength of a scholarship that was not theirs: and when showy pageants palled upon the King, and even his beloved comedies failed to spur his jaded wit, Philip could always find solace in the pedantic and affected academies and poetical contests over which he was so fond of presiding in his palace. There well-studied impromptus were mouthed, far-fetched conceits declaimed with a pomposity worthy of inspired prophecy, and preciosity run mad twisted and befouled the noble Castilian speech into the bastard *Latiniparla*, at which Quevedo gibed whilst himself revelling in it.

It was a Court of mean shams and squalid splendour, where all was rottenness but the fair outside. How ostentatious that outside was may be seen in the many records of court festivities that a bombastic age has handed to us. They are for the most part insufferably tedious catalogues of the dress and ornaments of pompously named nobles, courtiers, and favourites;[1] but a few details of two great feasts in which Isabel took a conspicuous part, may be set forth here as a specimen of the diversions of her time. An entertainment, given to the sovereigns by the Countess

[1] Soto de Aguilar, one of Philip's gentlemen of the wardrobe, wrote an interminable account of all the festivities of his time (MS. Royal Academy of History. Copy in the writer's possession), from which have been derived many details.

of Olivares early in June 1631, in the garden of her brother, the Count of Monterey, inspired Olivares with the idea of outdoing all previous efforts in the same direction. The time was short, for the night of St. John (24th June) was the day fixed. Two comedies had to be written specially for the occasion; and Lope de Vega, the most marvellously prolific playwright that ever lived, managed to compose one of them in three days: whilst Quevedo and Antonio Mendoza, put on their mettle by Lope's rapidity, wrote another jointly in a single day, whilst Olivarez himself snatched rare moments of leisure from State affairs, of which he was the universal minister, to superintend the rehearsals.

As if by enchantment, in a few days there sprang up in the gardens [1] a sumptuous pavilion from which the King and Queen, with their favoured courtiers, might see the play. In front was erected the open air theatre, crowded with crystal lights and rare flowers, whilst all around were platforms for other guests, choristers, etc. At nine o'clock at night, Philip and Isabel alighted from their coach, and were received by Olivares to the sounds of soft music. When they had taken their seats, Philip on a chair of state, and Isabel on a pile of cushions, trays of presents were brought them, perfumes, embroidered scented handkerchiefs, and essences in cut glass flasks,[2] Isabel being especially asked to

[1] The garden was that of Monterey, and with the two adjoining gardens, which for this occasion were thrown into one, occupied the whole space from the Calle de Alcala to the Carrera de San Geronimo, called the Salon del Prado.

[2] Amongst other trifles offered to the ladies at this feast were some of the small jars (*bucaros*) made of fine scented white clay, which it was at the time a feminine vice to eat. Madame D'Aulnoy gives a curious account of the evil effects produced by this strange eatable. She also mentions the curious craze in Madrid at the time amongst people of

accept in addition a jewelled Italian fan. Quevedo's comedy, *Quien mas miente medra mas* (He who lies most thrives most) was represented first, after a musical prologue and a poetic welcome to Isabel recited by the famous actress Maria de Riquelme. The first representation occupied two hours and a half, we are told by an eyewitness: 'during which many excellent dances were introduced; and although the players, having had little time to study, did not succeed in bringing out all the witty invention of the verses, it is certain that in many ordinary comedies together could not be found such an abundance of smart jests as in this one alone; for one day's work was sufficient for Don Francisco de Quevedo's wit to invent it all.'

When the first comedy was finished Philip and Isabel were led to the adjoining garden of the Duke of Maqueda,[1] where there had been erected two bowers or summer-houses of leaves and blossoms, with a great number of coloured lights. These two arbors, one for the King and the other for the Queen, communicated by an arched passage of foliage, and were surrounded by similar erections for the suite, each bower being supplied with a table of light refreshments. In the King's bower there was a hamper containing a long cloak of brown cloth, ornamented at the edge by scrolls of black and silver, solid silver hanging buttons, and loops serving for fastening. This was accompanied by a white wide-brimmed hat

fashion to throw eggshells filled with scent at each other in the theatres, parties, and even whilst promenading in carriages. Philip himself was much addicted to this pastime.

[1] This was the garden on the corner of the Carrera de San Geronimo and the Prado, now occupied by the Villahermosa palace and grounds.

trimmed with brown feathers and a white aigrette, and a Walloon falling collar,[1] which was still occasionally worn in place of the almost universal *golilla*. The King's brothers were similarly supplied with disguises; whilst in the Queen's bower the hamper contained a mirror, a brown woollen cloak embroidered at the bottom with sprigs of black silk and silver, the fastenings in this case also being solid silver hanging buttons and silver loops. The cloak was lined with silk of the same colour, hemmed and stitched with black and silver, and with it was a beautiful lace mantilla, a pleated lace ruff, and a white hat adorned with brown and white plumes and spangles. The whole Court was thus supplied with wraps and headgear against the night air. A light supper of surpassing daintiness was then served in the arbors, and the whole party, politely supposed to be disguised, proceeded to witness the second comedy; the Queen in her capricious garb, 'adding to her natural and marvellous graciousness and beauty the extraordinary attraction of the strangeness of attire, without losing an atom of the dignity which distinguishes her Majesty, no less than the other admirable virtues and perfections which shine in her.' We are assured that the unusual hats and garments worn by the King and his brothers were equally powerless to spoil their dignified appearance, 'as they unite those qualities which vulgar censure and envy always strive to keep apart, namely, great beauty and a noble air:' and the writer of the account from which I quote, nervous, apparently, at what the outside public would say to such a derogation of royalty as to don disguises,

[1] Philip is represented as wearing such a collar in his portrait by Velazquez at Dulwich College.

assures us that only a very select company was allowed to be present.[1]

The comedy of Lope de Vega, '*La Noche de San Juan*,' was then represented on the open air stage, and a short concert followed, after which the King and Queen were conducted to a flower-decked gallery erected in the other adjoining garden.[2] Here, after midnight, another delicate refection was partaken of, the Count and Countess of Olivares serving the King and Queen, the whole banquet being so well organised that everything went off with the utmost decorum and quietness, except for the sweet music which enlivened the feast. When the day was just breaking the King and Queen entered their coach and, after a few turns in the Prado, rode home to the palace to bed. Olivares was praised to the skies for the organisation of this lavish feast, and the wonder is expressed that the licentious crowd of people who frequented the Prado at night should have been so awed by the presence of the King in the garden adjoining, that no disturbance or disorder took place.

This feast, fine as it was, was completely thrown in the shade by another which took place a few yards away, two years later (1633), when, at tremendous expense, and much unjust appropriation of other people's property, Olivares run up and sumptuously furnished, in an amazing short time, the pleasure-palace of the Buen Retiro, which afterwards became Philip's favourite place of residence, where his comedies, academies, concerts, recitations and masquerades could be indulged

[1] Although he confesses that when most of the great folks had retired, and daylight lit up the scene of revelry, great numbers of people were found hidden in the shrubberies.

[2] On the spot where the Bank of Spain now stands, until a few years ago the site of the palace and grounds of the Marquis of Alcañices.

in with more propriety than in the gloomy, old half-Moorish palace on the cliff at the other end of the town. The house warming of the Buen Retiro lasted for a week in one continual round of tedious entertainment, in which invention and lavishness exhausted itself; but this was only the first of a series of such revels in the same place, for which any pretext was seized.

In January 1637, for instance, when Philip learnt that his brother-in-law, Ferdinand, had been elected King of the Romans, and future Emperor, an entertainment was ordered on a prodigious scale at the Buen Retiro. Three thousand men were set to work to level a hill that Pinelo (Anales) says 'had stood since the world was made,' for the purpose of building a wooden enclosure 608 feet long and 480 wide. Four hundred and eight large balconies or boxes surrounded this vast space, which was painted to look like masonry outside, whilst the inside was hung with silk and tapestries, and a silver railing ran round the front of the boxes. Nine hundred huge candelabra, 'with four lights in each,' illuminated the plaza; and the royal box, with its gilded roofs and pillars, and its green and gold appointments, glittered with mirrors which cast back the twinkling lights that fell upon them. Blazonry, imperial and royal crowns, scutcheons of arms and 'conceited devices,' were displayed on every side; and when, on the 15th February (Sunday), Philip came to the feast in state from the house, in the Carrera de San Geronimo, where he had robed, through a broad lane of people, with torch-bearers standing shoulder to shoulder throughout his route, people said that never had such a gorgeous show been seen in Spain.

With martial music, before them rode in his train, sixteen bands of nobles, twelve in each band, all dressed alike in black velvet and silver, and every man carrying in his right hand a lighted wax taper, whilst he restrained his prancing steed with the left. Last of all the bands came those of Olivares and the King, dressed like the others, but with some richer ornaments; and then great triumphal cars of strange and showy designs, made by Cosme Lotti, the clever Florentine. Each of them was 30 feet long and 46 feet high, lit with 100 torches, and contained innumerable figures and devices; and bands of music, the weight being so great that twenty-four bullocks were needed to draw each one, the bullocks themselves being hung with crimson, and accompanied by men in the garb of Orientals bearing silver torches. After them followed forty savages, whose clubs were torches; and as the great procession entered the enclosed space, and each party passed before Queen Isabel in the royal box, a fanfare sounded and the men saluted the sovereign; the whole procession, after having completed the circle, forming up in front of the royal box, whilst the mummers on the cars represented before the Queen 'a colloquy of peace and war.'

Philip's band of nobles in their musical ride and intricate evolutions, of course excelled all others; and the King, acclaimed as the champion cavalier of his realm, ascended to his wife's box to lay at her feet the guerdon of his prowess, and witness the rest of the feast at her side. For ten days thereafter the feasting and vain show went on, comedies, concerts, banquets, balls, water fetes on the lake, illumination of the woods, bull fights by torchlight, a poetical contest and greasy poles; a cotillon in which the party pelted each

other with eggshells full of perfume, and a hundred other devices to waste time and money,[1] and to beguile Philip from the looming affairs of State, now wholly managed by the strong, dark-faced man with the big head and bowed shoulders, whom most people hated for his imperiousness and his greed, the King's bogey as some called him, the second King of Spain, the Count Duke of Olivares.

The brilliant hopes of peace and retrenchment which had greeted Philip's accession had all been falsified. The Catholic union with France represented by the marriages of Philip with Isabel and of Louis XIII. with the Infanta Anna, had failed before the marriages themselves were complete; for the ambitious projects of Philip II. were again being revived by Olivares, who dreamed once more that Spain, cast down in the dust as she was, might yet hold the hegemony over the powers of Europe, and dictate to Christendom the articles of its faith. It was a vain, foolish, vision in the circumstances, for not of material strength alone had Spain been stripped, but of the real secret of its short predominance, the firm conviction of divine selection and of the invincibility of its sacred cause. The country was as politically heterogeneous as ever, whilst it had lost the homogeneity it had borrowed from religious exaltation; and yet, with its rival, France, growing daily in national solidarity and contributive capability under Richelieu, Spain was hurried by Olivares into a perfect fever for conquest, and to the arrogant re-assertion of its old exploded claims.

The employment of Spanish troops to overrun the

[1] Appendix to Mesonero Romanos' 'El Antiguo Madrid.' An account of this feast, though much less full, is also given in the newsletters of the date published by Sr. Rodriguez Villa in 'La Corte de España en 1636 y 1637.'

Palatinate and reduce Bohemia, and the recrudescence of the interminable war against the Dutch, had knit the two branches of the house of Austria closer together than ever, and strengthened the Emperor immensely. It was clear, that unless Richelieu struck promptly and boldly, France would once again, if Olivares had his way, be shut in by a circle of enemies. France and Savoy, alarmed at the revived pretensions of Spain, made common cause with the protestant powers, and soon all Europe was at war. Spain was ruined, but at least the court nobles and the church were rich, and the national pride was excited to the utmost. The war was primarily against France, but Isabel of Bourbon was as fiercely Spanish as if her father had not been Henry the Great, and she herself set the example of sacrifice. The jewels she loved so well were sold to provide men-at-arms ; the ladies, who took their tone from the Queen, sent their valuables the same way ; the nobles, aroused by appeals to their pride, contributed voluntarily a million ducats to the war fund ; and the church opened its hoards to the extent of raising and maintaining twenty thousand troops. All French property in Spain was confiscated, and the war for a time was carried on with an energy that reminded men of the great times of the Emperor. At first the Spaniards and Austrians carried all before them. Tilly in Germany, Spinola in Flanders, and Fadrique de Toledo on the sea, revived the glory of the house of Austria ; and Spanish pride rose once more to crazy arrogance. Philip the Great, the Planet King, were the titles already given to the idle young man, whom Olivares flattered and controlled. But when the first gust of enthusiasm was past, it was clear that Spain could not provide funds to carry on war by

land and sea the world over; and peace was made with England; Savoy was won over, and thenceforward it was a duel to the death between the house of Austria and the house of France, between Olivares and Richelieu.

For years the struggle went on with varying military phases, but with the inevitable result of reducing poverty-stricken, idle Spain to absolute penury. Every device to raise more money was tried, and all in vain. Crushing taxes upon production, debasement of the coinage, confiscation, repudiation and robbery, were but weak resources to maintain a great foreign war by a bankrupt State; and unless Olivares confessed failure more money must be had. The Cortes of Castile was powerless to check the national waste, but the Cortes of Aragon, Catalonia and Valencia, were still vigorous, and resisted all attempts to extort money except by their votes, grudgingly given only after much haggling. Olivares had understood as clearly as Ferdinand and Isabel had done, that for the King of Spain to be powerful enough to cope with France he must control the whole resources of Spain. The bond of religious exaltation had dissolved, and could not be restored; but the unification on political lines might be effected by weakening the separate autonomous institutions of the outlying States.

This was the plan of Olivares; doubtless a wise one if pursued patiently and cautiously in times of peace and in an era of interior reforms. But Olivares, like Ferdinand the Catholic before him, needed national unity in a hurry, in order to obtain resources to fight France, not for the purpose of making Spain a homogeneous peaceful nation,[1] and his reckless attempts to

[1] The policy and aims of Olivares are fully set forth in 'Spain, Its Greatness and Decay,' Cambridge Historical Series, by Martin Hume.

obtain money for his war with France by over-riding the autonomous privileges of Catalonia and Portugal, and extorting taxation without parliamentary sanction, precipitated the ruin that had long threatened. In June 1640 Barcelona flamed out in revolt against Castile, and soon all Catalonia, and part of Aragon and Valencia, had repudiated the dominion of Philip, and had made common cause with France. Six months later, in December 1640, Portugal for similar reasons proclaimed the Duke of Braganza king, and cast off for ever the yoke of Spain.

Philip, plunged in his pleasures, as we have seen, was kept in the dark. The Catalan insurgents were for him merely a band of rioters, as Olivares assured him, who would soon be suppressed; and when Portugal proclaimed its freedom the minister had the effrontery to rush into Philip's chamber with an appearance of joy, and congratulated him upon gaining a new dukedom and a vast estate. 'How?' asked the King. 'Sire,' replied Olivares, 'the Duke of Braganza has gone mad and revolted against your Majesty. All his belongings are now forfeit and are yours.' But Philip knew better, and for once lost his marble serenity. Blow after blow fell upon him. Starving subjects, a crippled trade, an empty treasury, and his richest realms in revolt: these were the results of his twenty years rule, and all he had to show was the hollow glory of battles gained far away in quarrels not his own.

He was good-hearted and really loved his subjects, but he had never learnt to rule, for he had never ruled his own passions or curbed his inclinations; and he was in despair when the truth came to him, bit by bit. Frantic prayers; tears and vows of amendment were

his way of dealing with all the blows of fortune: but there were others at his side who were more practical and determined than he. For years the yoke of Olivares and his wife had galled the neck of Isabel. Fond of pleasure as she was, she had a statesman's mind, and her love for her promising son Baltasar, now aged thirteen, and the pride of his parents' heart, had sharpened her wits as she saw his great inheritance slipping away from him under the rule of a minister whom she personally disliked for his rudeness even to her.[1] Again and again she had urged Philip to play the man and head his own armies in the field. Philip was willing, even eager, to do so; but Olivares would not hear of it, and the breach widened between the Queen and the minister. Olivares was detested by most of the principal nobles and churchmen. His policy of war could only be paid for out of the plunder derived from them, since all other classes were reduced to poverty, and the elements of discontent gradually grouped around Isabel.

At last Isabel's prayers, for once, overrode Olivares' counsel, and Philip stood firm in his determination to lead his own armies to rescue Catalonia from the French. Olivares left no stone unturned to defeat the Queen. Obedient physicians certified that the voyage would injure the King's health, submissive Councils voted against the risk of the sovereign's life in war, and constitutional lawyers laid down that it was not proper for the King to go. Philip, tired out at last, snatched a report of the Council from the hands of the Protonotary who was about to present it, and,

[1] Olivares was notoriously offensive to ladies. On one occasion when Isabel gave an opinion on State affairs he told Philip that monks must be kept for praying and women for child-bearing.

tearing it into pieces, cried, 'Bring me no more reports about my going to Catalonia, but prepare for the journey, for go I will.' The royal confessor—of course a creature of Olivares—added his remonstrance against the King's journey, but was at once stopped by Philip, and was told that if Olivares did not want to go he could stay away; and if he was not at Aranjuez when the King passed through he would not wait for him.

It was a victory for Isabel that presaged the great minister's fall; for Olivares dared not leave his master's side, and the Queen remained in the capital as Regent. Every device was adopted to delay the King's progress. Money was wanted, and when that had been extorted, in many cases by imprisonment,[1] the lavish and pompous preparations for the journey were endless. Nine state coaches and six litters, a hundred and three saddle horses, with crowds of courtiers, were considered necessary for a campaign; and every grandee and titled nobleman in Spain was warned that he must join the royal train. When, at last, after visits to numberless altars, Philip took leave of his wife at Vacia Madrid in April 1642, it was only to be delayed on the way for many weeks in ostentatious feasts, hunting parties and frivolities, before he at length arrived at Saragossa. By that time Aragon itself was half overrun by the French, and Philip, fully awake now to the terrible condition of affairs, grew ever more gloomy with his minister, who even now found means to keep the King isolated at Saragossa, miles away from the hostilities, in discounted inaction.

In the meanwhile Isabel in Madrid, free from the

[1] One hundred and fifty persons in Madrid alone were cast into dungeons for not being liberal enough with their contributions on this occasion.

terrifying presence of the favourite, organised the party of his opponents. She had always been a favourite with the crowd for her popular manners, but now she won their hearts completely; for they knew she was against the man upon whose back they laid all their woes. She visited the guards and barracks, mustered the regiments in the capital and addressed to them harangues, exciting their loyalty to the King and Spain. Once more she sacrificed her ornaments, devoted herself to the comfort of the soldiers, raised a new regiment at her own expense in her son's name, presided over the Councils, and infused more activity and enthusiasm in the administration than had been seen for years.

Isabel of Bourbon had seized her opportunity. Up to that time she had been simply an appanage of the splendours of the idle King; now, with the power of a Regent and the favour of the people, she became the strongest personality in Spain. Her letters to the King were vigorous and brave; and he thenceforward treated her with greater consideration, as if up to that time he had never realised that his wife was a woman of talent and spirit. Philip was kept idle at Saragossa, away from his army and his nobles for months. Once he acted on his own initiative and appointed a new commander-in-chief, the Marquis of Leganés, a kinsman of Olivares; but the appointment was unfortunate. At the first engagement afterwards Philip's army was utterly routed before Lerida; and as winter approached, with a badly fed, unpaid dwindling force, quarrelling generals, and his best provinces held by France, Philip returned to Madrid with an aching heart at the end of the year 1642.

He found the tone in his palace very different from

when he had left it. There were four women, all of whom had Philip's ear, and who hated Olivares. The Queen, Anna of Austria, Queen of France, Philip's sister, the Duchess of Mantua (Margaret of Savoy), his cousin, who had been his viceroy in Portugal, and who rightly blamed the minister for the loss of the country; she, moreover, being kept in semi-imprisonment at Ocaña by the minister's orders, and Doña Anna de Guevara, the King's old nurse, who was also forbidden at Court by the same influence. These ladies were all in communication with each other and with the nobles who were Olivares' enemies, led by the Counts of Paredes and Castrillo. 'My good intentions and my son's innocence,' Isabel told Paredes, 'must for once serve the King for eyes: for if he sees through those of the Count Duke much longer, my son will be reduced to a poor King of Castile.'

A week or two after the King's return, Isabel struck her blow at the tottering favourite. The first sign of the event was the escape of the King's Savoy cousin, the Duchess of Mantua, from Ocaña, and her arrival at Madrid late at night, after a ride of forty miles through a storm of sleet. Olivares was furious, and kept her waiting for four hours before he assigned her two wretched rooms in one of the royal convents. But Isabel received her in the palace with open arms the next morning. Then the banished nurse, Anna de Guevara, appeared in the palace in defiance of Olivares. That afternoon Philip visited his wife's room, and she, kneeling before him, with little Baltasar in her arms, implored him for the sake of their son to dismiss his evil minister before it was too late to rescue the realms his ineptitude had lost. In a torrent of words Isabel poured forth the pent-up

complaints of years; the wars that had ruined the country, the starving people, the lost provinces, the waste and frivolity that had been the rule of their lives, the insults and slights which she, personally, had suffered at the hands of Olivares and his wife, and the shame that a king, into whose hands God had confided so sacred a task, should delegate it to others.

Philip was deeply moved, though he said nothing; but as he left his wife's chamber, he was confronted in the corridor by the kneeling figure of his beloved foster-mother, Anna de Guevara. She, too, formed her impeachment of Olivares in impassioned words, and Philip could only reply, 'You have spoken the truth.' Then for two hours the Queen and the Duchess of Mantua were closeted with the King, and the victory was won.[1] That night, 17th January 1543, Olivares was dismissed. He struggled for days to regain his influence over the King, but tried in vain; for Philip, like most weak men, was obstinate when once his mind was made up, and so, ruined and degraded, the Count Duke turned his back upon the Court he had ruled, and went to madness and death, leaving Isabel of Bourbon, the mistress of the situation, the 'King's only minister,' as he said soon after, when he asked the nuns of shoeless Carmelites to pray for his 'minister.'

Madrid went wild with joy at Olivares' fall. 'Isabels have always saved Spain,' the people cried, as the King and Queen with the Duchess of Mantua went to the convent church of the barefoots to give thanks; 'Philip is King of Spain, at last, and will save

[1] Relatione dell' Ambasciatore di Venetia (MS. British Museum, Add. 8,701), and also an account attributed (doubtfully) to Quevedo, printed in vol. iii. of the Semanario Erudito).

his country.' But it needed much more than shouting to save Spain. Philip, spurred by his wife, plucked up more energy than ever before. He would be his own minister in future, and would take the field as soon as spring came, and wrest Catalonia from the French. Before that could be done, Philip's army met in Flanders with the greatest defeat it had ever sustained, a blow from which the reputation of the famous Spanish infantry never recovered. His young brother, Cardinal Ferdinand, had died two years before, and his place in Flanders had been taken by the Portuguese noble Mello. He was a good soldier; but Condé, young as he was, out-generalled him: and the defeat of Rocroy made it certain that France, and not Spain, would in future lead Europe. But yet the soil of Spain itself must be redeemed from the French invaders: and again, through the summer of 1643, Philip struggled manfully to regain his lost dominion; whilst Isabel, as Regent in Madrid, organised, directed, and encouraged, with a spirit and energy that won for her the fervent love of her husband's loyal subjects. Some success attended him, for he captured Lerida from the French: but the war was a terrible drain, and in the campaign of the following year, 1644, failure followed failure.

The poor, weary, King's heart was almost breaking under his many troubles, when he was brought into contact with the saintly woman, who until the end was his one refuge and solace, the Venerable nun, Maria de Agreda, whose exhortations and prayers sustained him in his hardest trials, which were yet to come. Philip was in Saragossa at the beginning of October when news came to him that his wife was ill. Sending his new favourite—for his good resolves in that

respect had soon failed—Luis de Haro, to the front, to acquaint the army of the King's reason for leaving, he started at once for Madrid.

On the 28th September 1644, Isabel had suffered from some sort of choleraic attack with much fever. She was copiously bled in the arms, and seemed to improve, but was soon seen to be suffering from violent erysipelas in the face; the disease soon spreading to the throat, which was almost closed, as if by diphtheria. The patient was bled eight times more, but still the inflammation grew; and, as usual with Spanish doctors, when bleeding failed, the charms of the church were resorted to. On the 4th October the last sacrament was administered, and the dead body of Saint Isidore was brought to the sick chamber. This having failed to effect a cure, the more sacred relic still, the miraculous image of the Virgin of Atocha was brought in procession from its shrine into the convent of St. Thomas, at Madrid, with the intention of placing it for adoration by the Queen's bed. When Isabel's permission was asked, she said that she was unworthy of the honour of such a visit, and Prince Baltasar visited the image instead, to implore upon his knees that his mother's life might be spared. 'There was no church nor convent in Madrid that did not bring out in procession its crucifixes and most sacred images in prayer for the Queen's health, and the whole people wailed fervently their prayers and rogations that her life might be granted.'[1]

On the 5th of October, the dying woman tried to make her new will; but she was too weak, and only left verbal authority before witnesses to the King to carry out her intentions. At noon on that day she

[1] News letter of 11th October in Semanario Erudito, vol. xxxiii.

sent for a *fleur de lys*, which formed one of the ornaments in the crown, and in which was encased a fragment of the true cross. This she worshipped fervently. Her two children were brought to her, Baltasar and the girl Maria Theresa, but she would not let them approach her for fear of contagion, though she blessed them fervently from afar. 'There are plenty of Queens for Spain,' she sighed, but princes and princesses are scarce. The next day, as the great clock of the palace marked a quarter past four in the afternoon, Isabel of Bourbon breathed her last, aged forty-one. Garbed as a Franciscan nun, the body was carried that night to the royal convent of barefoots ; and thence the day after in a leaden coffin, encased in another of brocade, it was borne back to the palace to lie in state amidst blazing tapers, nodding plumes, and all the pomp and circumstance of royal mourning.

In the meanwhile, Philip was hurrying from Aragon, a prey to the keenest anxiety. At Maranchon, about fifty miles from the capital, where the King had alighted at a wretched inn, the news came that the Queen was dead. The ministers and courtiers around the King forbore to tell him for a time, out of mere pity ; for the journey and anxiety had told upon him 'and he had only just dined.' But a few miles further on, at Almadrones, the news was broken to him in his carriage by those who accompanied him. A terrible burst of grief, and an order that he might be left alone in his sorrow, proved that Philip, for all his faithlessness, was fond of his wife ; and then, rather than enter the city where the Queen's body lay, he turned aside and sought solitude at the Pardo,[1] where he was soon joined by his son Baltasar, whilst, with the usual

[1] Matias de Novoa, 'Memorias.' He was one of Philip's chamberlains.

heavy pomp at dead of night, the body of Isabel was carried across the bleak Castilian table-land to the new jasper vault in the Escorial, which, from very dread, she had never dared to enter in her lifetime.

Three days after Isabel's death, the sainted mystic of Agreda saw, as she asserted, the phantom of the Queen before her, asking for the prayers of the godly to liberate her from the pains she was suffering in purgatory, for the vain splendour of her attire during her life.[1] To the nun Philip's cry of pain went up, whilst to all the rest of the world he turned a leaden face. On the 15th November he wrote—'Since the Lord was pleased to take from me to himself the Queen, who is now in heaven, I have wanted to write to you, but the great distress I am in, and the business with which I am overwhelmed, have hitherto prevented me from doing so. I find myself more oppressed with sorrow than seems bearable, for I have lost in one person alone all that I can lose in this world: and if it were not that I know, according to the faith I hold, that God sends to us that which is best and wisest, I know not what would become of me. But this thought, and this alone, makes me suffer my grief with utter resignation to the will of God; and I must confess to you that I have needed much help from on high to bring me to bear this cross patiently. I wanted to ask you to pray to God very earnestly for me in this dire trouble, and to aid me in asking Him to grant me grace to offer up this sorrow to Him, and take advantage of it for my own salvation.'[2]

[1] Life of Sor Maria de Agreda, quoted by Father Florez.

[2] Cartas de la Venerable Madre Sor Maria de Agreda, edited by F. Silvela. For two years after Isabel's death all comedies and theatrical representations were forbidden at the instance of Sor Maria, but in 1648 Philip consented to their resumption.

A yet more terrible trial for him came two years later; and a yet more heart-broken appeal to the nun for prayers, and to God to save him from rebellion against his hard fate, burst from the King's breaking heart when his only son died in his budding manhood, and left Philip, aged by suffering, to face matrimony again for the sake of leaving an heir to the crown of sorrow that was weighing him down.

Isabel of Bourbon died bravely, as she had lived. She was a Frenchwoman, married to bring about a friendship between France and Spain, and the two countries were at war continually from the time that her marriage was completed to the day of her death. In her time the sun of Spain sank as surely as the day of France brightened, and yet she never gloried in the triumph of the land of her birth, and kept faithful to the end to the Spain which she loved so well. It would be unfair to credit her with so clear and high a soul as either of the previous Isabels; but hers was a brave, sturdy, heart that accepted things as they were if she was unable to mend them; and, like her father before her, she enjoyed herself as much as she could whilst doing her duty valiantly and well.

BOOK IV

II

MARIANA OF AUSTRIA

BOOK IV

So long as Prince Baltasar lived Philip resisted all pressure that he should take another wife. The spring and summer were spent in Aragon, in the now almost despairing attempt to win back his dominions from the French. Approaches for his own marriage were made by various interests, but always gently put aside with a reference to his hopes being now centred in his son, whom he kept at his side and instructed him in the business of government. With a wretched lack of material resources his attempts to recover Catalonia were fruitless. One defeat followed another with wearisome reiteration, and as disaster deepened Philip became more moody and devout; his one adviser and confidant being the nun of Agreda, and his one resource agonised prayer. When his boy fell ill in May 1646, at Pamplona in Navarre, on his way to the seat of war, Philip's invocations to heaven for his safety were almost terrible in their intensity.[1] The lad recovered; and when he arrived with his father at Saragossa in July, the imperial ambassadors were awaiting them to offer in marriage to the heir of Spain his first cousin, the Archduchess Mariana of Austria, the daughter of the Emperor.

Philip could look nowhere else for an alliance.

[1] 'Cartas de la Venerable Madre Sor Maria de Agreda y Felipe IV.' Edited by Silvela.

France was his deadly enemy, though it was governed by his sister Anna as regent, and a further marriage experiment in that direction was out of the question at present, even if there had been an available French princess.[1] The Emperor and Spain, on the other hand, had been—to Spain's ruin—fighting shoulder to shoulder throughout the whole of the thirty years' war, now dragging to its conclusion, and the treaty was promptly signed for the marriage of Baltasar, aged seventeen, with Mariana of Austria, three years younger. With regard to their betrothal, Philip wrote to the nun thus: 'My sister, the Empress, having died, I consider it advisable to draw closer the ties between the Emperor and ourselves in this way, my principal aim being the exaltation of the faith; for it is certain that the more intimate the two branches of our house are, so much the firmer will religion stand throughout Christendom.'

Only two months later, early in October, the blow fell, and the prince died of smallpox. Whilst he lay ill the distracted father wrote frantically to his correspondent, crying for God's mercy to save him from this last trial. But when the boy had died the King's letters assumed a tone of dull despair. God had not heard his prayers, and he supposed it was for the best. He had done everything to dedicate this grief to God; but his heart was pierced, and he knew not whether he lived or dreamed. He was resigned, he said, but feared his constancy, and so on; each phrase

[1] Marie Anne de Montpensier, the daughter of Gaston, Duke of Orleans (La Grande Demoiselle), was suggested, but rejected at once as impossible, both from the French and Spanish point of view! It would, indeed, have further alienated, rather than have drawn together, the French regency and Spain.

revealing a heart that almost doubted the efficacy of prayer, and the goodness of the Almighty.[1]

Thenceforward, for a time, his conduct changed. He had done his best and had not spared himself. He had prayed night and day, and had fashioned his life according to monastic counsels. But defeat, trouble, poverty and bereavement had fallen upon him in spite of all, and Philip, in the intervals of his poignant contrition, plunged into dissolute excesses that shocked and scandalised the devotees about him. Philip was forty-two, about the age when some of his forbears had developed that strain of mystic devotion that so nearly borders madness. He had no male heir, and only one tiny daughter of eight, and his troubles and excesses had prematurely aged him. All Spain demanded of him a man child to succeed to his greatness; and the remonstrances of the churchmen and the nuns at the scandal of his life were reinforced by the Emperor's ambassadors, who urged that he should marry the girl-niece who had been betrothed to his dead son.

And so history repeated itself; and, as in the case of his grandfather, Philip II., the King accepted for his wife the Austrian princess who had been destined for his daughter-in-law. Of his many illegitimate children he had only legitimised one, Don Juan José of Austria, the son of the actress Maria Calderon. He was brilliant and handsome, and had won his father's regard; but he could never be King of Spain; and Philip, with little enthusiasm, wedded an immature girl for the sake of giving an heir to his country, and for the maintenance of the solidarity of the house of Austria, which typified the old impossible

[1] 'Cartas de la Venerable Madre Sor Maria de Agreda y Felipe IV.'

claim of Spain to dictate the religion of the world. It was a disastrous resolve, which ensured the consummation of ruin to the country and the cause which it was intended to benefit.

Philip was straining every nerve against the French in Catalonia and Flanders; he was, to the extent of his ability, attacking the Portuguese on the eastern frontier; and his kingdom of Naples was in full revolt. The long war had exhausted him, as it had exhausted all Europe: he had, to his own destruction, fought the battles of religion in central Europe by the side of the Emperor for many years; and his new marriage was intended to fasten the Emperor to him in the cause of Spain. The powerlessness of marriage bonds to resist political forces was once more proved before Philip saw his bride. The Treaty of Westphalia (October 1648) was finally signed, and Spain, which had suffered most in the war, sacrificed most in the peace. The religious question in Germany was settled for good, and the dream of Charles v. was finally dissipated: the independence of Holland, the point which had dragged Spain down and kept her at war for nearly a hundred years, was recognised at last, out of sheer impotence for further struggle by Philip. Alsace went to France, and Pomerania to Sweden: the central European powers were satisfied: there was nothing more for the Emperor to fight for, and Spain was left face to face alone with her enemy France, and without the imperial co-operation for which Philip had paid so dear.

With ceremonies and pomp which would be tedious to relate the young princess left Vienna on the 13th November 1648, travelling slowly by coach with her brother, the King of Hungary, towards Trent, where

the representatives of Philip were to take charge of the new Queen. Endless festivities were held at Trent and the Italian cities,[1] and simultaneously in Madrid. Illuminated streets, bull-fights, and palace-revels, which Philip attended with dull hopeless face and heavy heart, celebrated the announcement of the nuptials, coinciding in time with the rejoicings for the recovery of Naples by the diplomacy of young Don Juan of Austria, Philip's son, in the winter of 1648. But it was well into the autumn (4th September) of 1649 before the bride and her Spanish household of one hundred and sixty nobles at length landed at Denia in the kingdom of Valencia.

At Navalcarnero, a small village some fifteen miles from Madrid, the great cavalcade arrived on the 6th October 1649; and there it was arranged that Philip should first meet his bride.[2] For months he had been writing by every post to the nun, deploring and repenting his inability to resist the temptations of the flesh, and ascribing to his sins the wars, pestilence and misery that were scourging his beloved people. With such qualms of conscience as this it must have been welcome to him—weary voluptuary though he was—to enter into a licit union, which, at least, might rescue him from temptation. Disguised, he watched his bride enter Navalcarnero, and then went to lodge in another

[1] The progress and events from day to day are related by Mascarenhas, Bishop of Leyria, who accompanied the Queen, in 'Viage de la Serenisima Reina Doña Margarita de Austria.' Madrid, 1650.

[2] It has puzzled many inquirers why the marriages of the kings of Spain should usually have taken place in poverty-stricken little villages like Navalcarnero and Quintanapalla, where no adequate accommodation existed, or could be created. The real reason appears to be that when a royal marriage took place in a town the latter was freed for ever after from paying tribute. The poorer the place, therefore, the smaller the sacrifice of public revenue.

village before paying his formal visit to her a day afterwards. Mariana was just fifteen, a strong, passionate, full-blooded girl with a hard heart. On her way from Denia the mistress of the robes, the Countess of Medellin, had gravely remonstrated with her for laughing at the buffoons, who sought to amuse her, and had schooled her in the etiquette that forbade a Queen of Spain to walk in public. But Mariana made light of such prudery, and in the insolence of her gaiety and youth went her own way, laughing her fill at the comedy played before her at Navalcarnero, to while away the time until supper.

The King and Queen met for the first time in the little oratory where their marriage was to be confirmed by the Archbishop of Toledo, and then, after more comedies and bullfights, the royal pair proceeded to the Escorial, lit up for the occasion by 11,000 lights, to pass the first days of their honeymoon. From the Retiro on the 15th November Mariana made her state entry into Madrid. The capital surpassed itself in its signs of rejoicing, for Philip was extremely popular and his subjects yearned for an heir to the throne. We are told that the whole distance from the Retiro to the old palace, from one end of Madrid to the other, the way was spanned by arches of flowers, whilst monumental erections with devices of welcome were placed at each principal point.[1] The Queen rode a snow-white palfrey; and as she smiled her frank gratified smile to the lieges they welcomed her for her rosy, painted cheeks and red pouting lips, knowing little the cold selfish heart that beat beneath the buxom bosom.

Philip was too busy for weeks in the delights of his

[1] It is all described in Amador de los Rios Historia de Madrid, and the prodigious sums spent are given.

honeymoon to write to his confidante the nun, presumably also because the sins he so deeply deplored, and so constantly repeated, did not tempt him during the first weeks of his married life. But when, on the 17th November, he found time to write, he expresses the utmost satisfaction at his bride. 'I confess to you,' he says, 'that I know not how I can thank our Lord sufficiently for the mercy he has shown to me in giving me such a companion; for all the qualities I have hitherto recognised in my niece are great, and I find myself exceedingly content, and full of a desire to prove myself not ungrateful for so singular a mercy by changing my mode of life and submitting myself in all things to His will.'[1] The nun in answer to this urged the King to live well in his new condition, 'trying earnestly that the Queen shall have all your attention and regard, instead of your Majesty casting your eyes on other objects strange and curious.' All Spain, the nun continues, is yearning for an heir, and her own prayers are ceaseless to that end.

Philip was full of good resolves. He would never go astray again; but, though he was as anxious for a son as his people were, he was in doubt yet as to his new wife's having arrived at sufficient maturity to have children: 'although others of her age, which is fifteen years, can do so. But it is easy for our Lord to remedy this, and I hope in His mercy that He will do it.'[2] In the meanwhile, the depositary of all these hopes, Mariana, was diverting herself as best she could in girlish romps with her step-daughter of ten, who seems to have been her constant companion. Philip, in writing of them, generally speaks of them as 'the girls,' and frequently mentions Mariana's joy at shows and

[1] Cartas de Sor Maria. [2] *Ibid.*

gaiety. Once more the Buen Retiro rang with light laughter. Comedies and masquerades were again the constant diversion of the Court, though pestilence was scourging the land, Catalonia and Portugal defied the arms of Spain, and the French in Flanders still held the armies of Philip at bay. Pleasure, the joy of living, absorbed the young Queen's attention; and after the first few months of marriage, Philip usually refers to her somewhat wearily, and only with reference to her enjoyments or to his hopes of progeny. After one disappointment a child was born in July 1651, a girl, who was christened with the usual unrestrained splendour by the name of Maria Margaret.[1] Again high hopes were entertained in due time, only to be disappointed, and Mariana fell into melancholy; for Philip had relapsed into his bad habits again, notwithstanding his vows and resolves, and the delay in the coming of a son increased his coldness towards his wife. A frenzied round of gaiety at the Buen Retiro did something to arouse the Queen out of her depression,[2] but Philip had now but little pleasure in his old love for glittering shows; for the prayed for son came not, and war and pestilence still scourged Spain, as he firmly believed for his own personal backsliding.

The life of the palace had settled down to utter monotony. Philip, immersed in business; 'with his pen always in his hand,' as he says, had little time for frivolity. His demeanour in public was like that of a statue, and when he received ministers or deputations it was noticed that no muscle of his face moved but his lips. Every movement was settled beforehand; and it was possible to foretell a year in advance exactly

[1] In course of time she married her cousin the Emperor Leopold.
[2] 'Reinas Catolicas.' Florez.



MARIANA OF AUSTRIA.

After a Painting by Velazquez.

gaiety. Once more the Buen Retiro rang with light laughter. Comedies and masquerades were again the constant diversion of the Court, though pestilence was scourging the land, Catalonia and Portugal defied the arms of Spain, and the French in Flanders still held the armies of Philip at bay. Pleasure, the joy of living, absorbed the young Queen's attention; and after the first few months of marriage, Philip usually refers to her somewhat wearily, and only with reference to her enjoyments or to his hopes of progeny. After one disappointment a child was born in July 1651, a girl, who was christened with the usual unrestrained splendour by the name of Maria Margarita.[1] Again high hopes were entertained in due time only to be disappointed, and Mariana fell into melancholy; for Philip had relapsed into his bad habits again, notwithstanding his vows and resolves, and the delay in the coming of a son increased his coldness towards his wife. A frenzied round of gaiety at the Buen Retiro did something to arouse the Queen out of her depression,[2] but Philip had now but little pleasure in his old love for glittering shows; for the prayed-for son came not, and war and pestilence still scourged Spain, as he firmly believed for his own personal backsliding.

The life of the palace had settled down to utter monotony. Philip, immersed in business, 'with his pen always in his hand,' as he says, had little time for frivolity. His demeanour in public was like that of a statue, and when he received ministers or deputations it was noticed that no muscle of his face moved but his lips. Every movement was settled beforehand; and it was possible to foretell a year in advance exactly

[1] In course of time she married her cousin the Emperor Leopold.
[2] 'Soltar Cordoba.' Flores.



where the Court would be on a given day, and what the King would be doing at a certain hour. Mariana lived in her own way, with little show of affection for her elderly husband, or for the people amongst whom she lived. She had fallen by this time (1657) into the stiff etiquette of the Spanish Court, and in the intervals of her hoydenish merriment she displayed a haughtiness as great as that of Philip himself without his underlying tenderness or his pathetic resignation. She was German in all her sympathies, and soon lost the love of Spaniards that had been gained by the freshness of her youth.[1] Dressed in the tremendous triple-hooped farthingale; with her stiff, squarely arranged wig, and her full painted cheeks, she presented a sufficiently dignified appearance in public; but her flat, unamiable face, hard, weary eyes, and bulging jaw, gave her a look which repelled rather than attracted.

The outward prudery of her Court barely veiled a state of atrocious immorality amongst all classes. It was considered almost a reproach for any of the ladies, all widows or unmarried, who were attached to the palace service by hundreds, to have no extravagant gallant ready to ruin himself for her caprices; and, as a natural consequence, assassination was rife in the capital; and the news letters of the time are full of scandalous stories, in which nobles, ladies and actresses are concerned disgracefully. Corruption reigned more impudently than ever, and whilst ships were rotting on the beach, and unpaid soldiers were starving in the midst of war, vast sums were spent on foolish shows and revelry. Philip now had little pleasure in it all,

[1] Even thus early she began to introduce Austrian etiquette in her receptions; such, for instance, as causing the ladies presented to her to pass before her, in by one door and out by an opposite door (Avisos de Barrionuevo).

going through it like a leaden automaton, only to torture himself with remorse afterwards, but withal, habit or mere weakness led him to allow such scandals as the imposition of a tax upon oil to pay for the new stage at the Buen Retiro, and the robbing of the shrine of the venerated Virgin of Atocha of a great silver chandelier for the illumination of the theatre.[1]

In September 1654 it was announced that Mariana was again pregnant. 'God grant that it may be so,' wrote a courtier: 'but if it is going to be a girl it is of no use to us. We do not want any of them. There are plenty of women already.'[2] The King's hopes rose that a son would at last be born to him, and Mariana insisted upon accompanying him everywhere; for in the intervals of her merrymaking she was a prey to deep melancholy, increased when a girl infant was born only to die a few days afterwards. The prognostications of astrologers and quacks decided in the summer of 1655 that the prayed-for son was now really on the way; and as time went on unheard of preparations were made for the event. The Marquis of Heliche had twenty-two new comedies written ready for representation in the coming festivities, and large sums of money were spent in decorations beforehand. Mariana's lightest caprice was law, and Philip hardly left her side. The old palace depressed her, and the Buen Retiro became her permanent abode; Don Juan of Austria sent from Flanders the most wonderful tapestries, and bed and bed furniture ever seen, with a vast bedstead of gilt bronze which cost a fortune; the bedroom furniture being a mass of seed pearl and gold embroidery upon satin. 'There is no

[1] Avisos de Barrionuevo, vol. ii. p. 303 (February 1656).
[2] *Ibid.* vol. i.

getting the Queen out of the Retiro, for she frets in the palace. She passes the mornings amongst her flowers, the days in feastings, and the nights in farces. All this goes on incessantly, and I do not know how so much pleasure does not pall upon her.'[1] But again the prophets were wrong, for in December another epileptic girl child was born and died: 'Saint Gaetano notwithstanding.'[2]

Mariana fell gravely ill after this, and a slight stroke of paralysis, amongst other ailments, kept her for many weeks hovering between life and death. Philip did his best to raise her spirits, and when the Cortes petitioned him to have his elder daughter Maria Theresa acknowledged as heiress, he refused, in order not to distress his wife, who, he said, would be sure to have an heir directly. His letters to the nun show that he, at this period, was himself in the depths of black despair, overborne by his troubles; for Cromwell had seized Jamaica, and Spain was at war by sea and land with England and France together. Whilst Philip was gratifying his young wife by such entertainments as looking on from concealed boxes in a theatre crowded with women, whilst a hundred rats were surreptitiously let loose upon the floor;[3] he was a prey to a morbid misery closely akin to madness, anticipating an early death, weeping for the utter ruin that enveloped him and Spain, and the absence of a male heir.

One of his strange whims at this time was to pass hours alone in the new jasper mausoleum at the

[1] Barrionuevo, vol. ii.

[2] The comedy of San Gaetano had been represented at the special desire of the Queen shortly before, not without some difficulty from the Inquisition, and the crush to see it was so great that several people were killed.

[3] Barrionuevo, vol. ii. 308

Escorial, to which the bodies of his ancestors had just been transferred. He wrote after one of these visits in 1654:—'I saw the corpse of the Emperor whose body, although he has been dead ninety-six years, is still perfect, and by this is seen how the Lord has repaid him for his efforts in favour of the faith whilst he lived. It helped me much: particularly as I contemplated the place where I am to lie, when God shall take me. I prayed Him not to let me forget what I saw there;'[1] and shortly after this another contemporary records that the King passed two solitary hours on his knees on the bare stones of the mausoleum before his own last resting-place in prayer; and that when he came out his eyes were red and swollen with weeping.[2]

Again, in August 1656, a girl child was born to Mariana only to die the same day, and then depression, utter and profound, fell upon Philip and his wife, for no ray of light came from any direction. There was no money for the most ordinary needs. The Indian treasures were regularly captured by the English, who closely invested Cadiz itself, whilst the French on the Flanders frontier and in Catalonia worked their will almost without impeachment, and the Portuguese defied their old sovereign. Philip was ready to make peace almost at any sacrifice, at least with the French; but the demands of Mazarin were as yet too humiliating for a power which had claimed for so long the predominance in Europe. At length, in the midst of the distress, hope dawned once more, and again the wiseacres predicted that this time the Queen would give birth to a son. Mariana's every fancy was grati-

[1] Cartas de la Venerable Sor Maria de Agreda.
[2] Barrionuevo, vol. iii. 63.

fied.[1] Water parties on the lake at the Retiro, endless farces, as usual, capricious bull feasts, and diversions of all sorts, kept up her spirits; and Don Juan sent another sumptuous bed and furniture more splendid than the previous gift. Whilst this waste was going on in one direction, taxes were being piled up in a way that made them unproductive, and such was the penury in the King's palace that Philip himself, on the vigil of the Presentation of the Virgin (20th November 1657), had nothing to eat but eggs without fish, as his stewards had not a real of ready money to pay for anything (Barrionuevo). Exactly a week after the King was reduced to such straits, the child of his prayers arrived. An heir was born at last to the weary man of fifty-two, whose crown was crushing him.

Madrid as usual went crazy with turbulent rejoicing, whilst Mariana in the gravest danger battled for her life. Every bench and table in the palace, we are told, was broken, and no eating house or tavern in the town escaped sacking by the crowd of idle rogues who marched with music and singing, whilst they stripped decent people even of their garments to pay for their orgy.[2] Later, there were the usual bull fights, masquerades, and the eternal comedies with new stage effects; and not a noble in Castile failed to go and congratulate the King. Astrologists were to the fore, as usual, foretelling by the stars that the newly born babe would grow up to be wise, prudent and brave, and would outlive all his brothers and sisters in a prosperous

[1] One day (8th November 1657) she suddenly asked for some *Buñuelos* (hot fritters), and men were sent out hurrying to the Plaza where they were sold. A great cauldron of 8 lbs. of them were brought smoking hot covered with honey, and Mariana ate greedily of them, to her great contentment.

[2] Barrionuevo.

fortunate career. The proud father was full of gratitude to the Most High for the signal favour conferred upon him. 'Help me, Sor Maria,' he wrote to the nun, 'to give thanks to Him; for I myself am unable to do so adequately: and pray Him to make me duly grateful, and give me strength henceforward to do His holy will. The new-born child is well, and I implore you take him under your protection, and pray to our Lord and His holy mother to keep him for their service, the exaltation of the faith and the good of these realms. And if this is not to be, then pray let him be taken from me before he comes to man's estate.' [1]

Philip, like his courtiers, went into rhapsodies of admiration of the beauty and perfection of the infant that had been born to him. So fair an angel surely never had been seen than this poor epileptic morsel of humanity from whom so pathetically much was expected. On the 6th December Philip rode in State on a great Neapolitan horse through the streets of Madrid, to give thanks to the Virgin of Atocha for the boon vouchsafed to him, and the capital began its round of official rejoicings. Fountains ran wine, music and dancing went on night and day, mummers in strange disguise promenaded the streets in procession, bullfights and the usual tiresome buffoonery testified that Madrid shared with the King his delight that an heir had been born to him.[2] Philip himself was in high

[1] Cartas de la Venerable Sor Maria de Agreda. The King's prayer came true, for the child died at the age of four.

[2] The extravagance of these rejoicings produced a remonstrance from the nun to the King. 'It is good and politic for your Majesty to receive the congratulations of your subjects . . . but I do beseech you earnestly not to allow excessive sums to be spent on these festivities when there is a lack of money needful even for the defence of your crown. Let there be in them no offence to God. . . . It is good to rejoice for the birth of the prince, but let us do it with a clear conscience.'—*Cartas.*

good humour, bandying jests with his favourite, Don Luis de Haro; and, at the brilliant ceremony of the christening of Prince Philip Prosper, a week later, which he witnessed hidden behind the closed jalousies of his pew, he was proudly pleased at the vigorous squalls of the infant. 'Ah!' he whispered to Haro, 'that's what I like to hear, there is something manly in that.'[1] It was fortunate for Philip that he could not foresee that this babe for whom he had prayed so fervently would be snatched from him four years later, stricken by the calamity of its descent; and that the later child that would succeed him, the offspring of incest too, would end the line of the great Emperor in decrepit imbecility, matching sadly with the decadence of his country.

Whilst the continued and costly celebrations of the Queen's tardy recovery after the birth of her sickly child were scandalising the thoughtful, national affairs were going from bad to worse.[2] Don Luis de Haro, Philip's prime minister, had started in January 1658 to relieve Badajoz, closely invested by the masculine Queen of Portugal, herself a Spaniard, and had been disgracefully routed by the despised Portuguese. This

[1] Barrionuevo. A curious circumstance is related by the same journalist as having taken place at the christening. The lady-in-waiting, as usual, handed the child to the little Infanta Margaret, aged six, who was the godmother; and the only clothing the babe wore was an extremely short tunic, the lower limbs being entirely bare. The little Infanta, shocked at what she considered disrespectful neglect, asked angrily why the prince was not properly dressed; and had to be told that it was done purposely in order that all might see that he was really a male.

[2] Barrionuevo relates (vol. iv. p. 166), that a saintly Franciscan friar, upon being appealed to by Philip to pray for the health of his child, replied that he would do so, but a better prayer still would be for the King to give up his constant comedies and rejoicings and pray to God himself. This was in June 1658; and the nun was for ever giving to Philip the same advice.

was a humiliation that proved to the world the complete impotence of Spain: but in June of the same year a more damaging blow still was dealt at the power that had held its head so high in the past. The battle of the Dunes, or Dunkirk, in which Don Juan, Condé and the Duke of York on the Spanish side were pitted against Turenne, aided by the troops of Cromwell, was a crushing defeat for Philip's forces, and placed all Flanders at the mercy of the French. It was clear that Philip could fight no longer, for Spain had well nigh bled to death; and so great was the depopulation of Castile that a project was adopted —though not carried out for lack of money — to re-people the country with Irish and Dalmatian Catholics.

There were other circumstances that tended towards peace besides the exhaustion of Spain. The long years of war had told heavily upon the resources of France: the Catalans by this time had grown heartily tired of their French king Stork, and were yearning for the return of their Spanish king Log; and, above all, Mazarin had long cast covetous eyes on the Spanish succession, in the very probable case of Philip's issue by his second wife failing. For years the Queen-regent, Anna of Austria, had been striving for peace with her brother, but circumstances and national pride had always defeated her. The efforts of the Emperor's agents in Madrid, aided very powerfully by Mariana, had also been exerted to prevent a close agreement between France and Spain. In 1656 M. de Lionne had been sent secretly by Mazarin to Madrid, where he passed many months in close conference with Luis de Haro, endeavouring, but without success, to negotiate peace.

In one of their meetings Haro wore in his hat, as an ornament, a medal impressed with the portrait of the Infanta Maria Theresa, Philip's daughter by his first wife. 'If your King would give to my master for a wife the original of the portrait you wear,' said Lionne, duly instructed by Mazarin, 'peace would soon be made.' Nothing more was said at the time, for, in the absence of a son, Philip dared not marry the heiress of Spain to his nephew Louis XIV., but when an heir was born to Mariana, the idea of a marriage between Maria Theresa and Louis XIV. at once became realisable. The Austrian interest still stood in the way; and Mariana, who was as purely an ambassador for her brother as his accredited diplomatic representative was, used all her efforts to frustrate the plan; and a marriage was actively advocated by her between the Infanta and Leopold, the heir of the empire. Philip for a long time allowed himself to incline to the Austrian connection that had already cost him so dear.

As soon as the French match looked promising, as a result of much secret intrigue between Mazarin and Haro, the Emperor offered to Philip a great army in Flanders to aid in expelling the French; and when Philip was hesitating between the persuasions of his wife Mariana, and her kinsmen on the one hand, and the pressure of poverty on the other, which made a continuance of the war difficult for him, Mazarin played a trump card which won the game. Louis was taken ostentatiously to Lyons to woo the Princess of Savoy; and, in fear of a coalition against Spain, Philip sent his minister Haro to negotiate peace with Mazarin personally on the banks of the Bidasoa. During all the autumn of 1659, on the historic Isle

of Pheasants in the river, the keen diplomatists fought over details; and often their labours seemed hopeless, for the Spaniards were as proud as ever and the French as greedy. But the frail health of the puling babe, who alone stood between the Infanta and the Spanish succession, at length made Mazarin more yielding: the last great obstacle, the restoration of Condé's forfeited estates, was overcome, and one of the most fateful treaties in history was settled.

It was still a bitter pill for Spain, for she lost much of her Flemish territory and the county of Roussillon; but, at least, she regained Catalonia, and, above all, secured peace with France. The Infanta was to marry Louis XIV., and the Spaniards insisted that she should renounce for ever her claim to the succession of her father's crown, though Mazarin made the clause ineffective by stipulating that the renunciation should be conditional upon the entire payment of the dowry of 500,000 crowns, which, it was more than probable, Philip could never pay.[1] In the meanwhile Mariana had borne another son, who died in his early infancy; and at the pompous embassy of the Duke de Grammont to Madrid, formally to ask for the hand of the Infanta, she took little pains to appear amiable to an embassy which she looked upon as bringing a defeat for her and her family.

A vivid picture of her and her husband at one of the great representations at the theatre of the old palace is given by a follower of Grammont, who wrote an account of the embassy.[2] 'The great saloon,' he says, 'was lit only by six great wax candles in gigantic

[1] 'Recueil des Instructions données aux ambassadeurs de France en Espagne,' vol. i. (Morel-Fatio.)

[2] 'Journal du Voyage d'Espagne.' Paris, 1669.

stands of silver. On both sides of the saloon, facing each other, there are two boxes or tribunes with iron grilles. One of these was occupied by the Infantas and some of the courtiers, whilst the other was destined for the Marshal (Grammont). Two benches covered with Persian rugs ran along the sides facing each other, and upon these some twelve of the ladies of the court sat, whilst we Frenchmen stood behind them. . . . Then the Queen and the little Infanta entered, preceded by a lady holding a candle. When the King appeared he saluted the ladies, and took his seat in the box on the right hand of the Queen, whilst the little Infanta sat on her left. The King remained motionless during the whole of the play, and only once said a word to the Queen, although he occasionally cast his eyes round on every side. A dwarf was standing close by him. When the play was finished all the ladies rose and gathered in the middle, as canons do after service. They then joined hands, and made their courtesies, a ceremony that lasted seven or eight minutes; for each lady made her courtesy separately. In the meanwhile the King was standing, and he then bowed to the Queen, who in her turn bowed to the Infanta, after which they all joined hands and retired.'

In April 1660 Philip bade farewell to Mariana and set forth on this famous journey to the French frontier, to ratify the peace of the Pyrenees with his sister Anna of Austria, whom he had not seen since their early youth more than forty years before, and to give his daughter in marriage to the young King of France. Philip, for the sake of economy, had ordered that as small a train as possible should accompany him; but, withal, so enormous was his following and that of his

nobles,[1] with the huge stores of provisions and baggage, that his cavalcade covered over twenty miles of road. Slowly winding its way at the rate of only about six miles a day through the ruined land, greeted by the poor hollow-eyed peasants that were left with tearful joy, because it meant peace, the King's procession at last arrived at the seat of so many royal pageants, the banks of the Bidasoa, early in June. Upon the tiny eyot in mid-river, the temporary palace that in the previous year had been the meeting-place of Haro and Mazarin, still remained intact; and here the sumptuous ceremony was performed that gave to Louis XIV. the custody of his future wife, Maria Theresa.[2]

What all the courtiers wore, and how they looked, is described *ad nauseum* by French and Spanish spectators; but the greatest man in all the host, upon the Spanish side at least, was the King's quartermaster, whose exquisite taste and knowledge directed the artistic details of the pageant, Diego de Silva Velazquez, whose garments may be described as a specimen of the rest. His dress was of dark material, entirely covered by close Milanese silver embroidery, and he wore around his neck the golilla that had replaced the ruff, at the instance of Philip many years before, to save the waste of starching.[3] Upon his cloak was embroidered the great red floreated sword-like cross of Santiago, and at his side he wore a sword in a finely wrought silver scabbard; whilst around his

[1] Luis de Haro alone took a household of 200 persons, whilst the King's medical staff alone consisted of ten doctors and four barbers.

[2] 'Viage del Rey N. S. a la Frontera de Francia.' Castillo. Madrid, 1667.

[3] The golilla, so characteristic of Philip's reign, was a stiff cardboard projecting collar, the under surface of which was covered with cloth to match the doublet, and the upper surface lined with light silk.

neck there hung a heavy gold chain from which depended a small diamond scutcheon with the same cross enamelled in red upon it.[1]

The restoration of the Stuarts in England soon after the ratification of the Treaty of the Pyrenees, made a peace easy of negotiation between their country and Spain, and by the beginning of 1661, Philip found himself for the first time in a reign of forty years at peace with all the powers outside the Peninsula.

But rebellious Portugal had still to be reconquered. Again disaster befell the Spaniards. Don Juan, the King's son, was utterly routed at Amegial after some partial successes; for Mariana had been busily intriguing against him, and had caused the reinforcement and resources he asked for to be denied him.

Whilst Don Juan was struggling against the Portuguese and their English abettors with inadequate forces and ineffectual heroism, Philip was sinking deeper into the morbid devotional misery that afflicted in their decline so many of his race. His only son, Philip Prosper, after a life of four years of almost constant sickness, was snatched from him early in November 1661, as a younger boy had been a year previously. The bereaved father, who had watched over his son's bed until the last, nearly lost heart at this heavy blow; and was so much overcome, as he confesses, as to be unable even to write for a time to his one refuge, the nun of Agreda. When he did so, the usual self-accusing cry of agony went up—'I assure you,' he wrote, 'what troubles me most, much more even than my loss, is to see clearly that I have

[1] Palamino. Life of Velazquez. All the sumptuary decrees were suspended. From this date the Spanish fashion in dress changed.

offended God, and that He sends all these sorrows as a punishment for my sins. I only wish I knew how to amend myself and comply entirely with His holy will. I am doing, and will do, all I can; for I would rather lose my life than fail to do it. Help me, as a good friend, with your prayers, to placate the righteous anger of God, and to implore our Lord, who has seen good to take away my son, to bless the delivery of the Queen, which is expected every day, and to keep her in perfect health and the child that is to be born, if it be for his good service, for otherwise I desire it not. The Queen has borne this last blow with much sorrow but christian resignation. I am not surprised at this, for she is an angel, Oh! Sor Maria: if I had only carried out your doctrines, perhaps I should not find myself in this state.'[1]

A few days after this was written, Mariana once more bore a son, a weak, puling infant, that seemed threatened with an early death; but whose birth threw Spain into a whirlwind of rejoicing as extravagant as any that had gone before. But Philip was sunk too deep now into despondency, by witchcraft the people said, to be aroused much, even by the birth of a son; and, as the shadows fell around him, the power of Mariana grew. With her clever German Jesuit confessor and confidant, Father Everard Nithard, she soon managed to drag the unhappy King again into the vortex of imperial politics, that had already well-nigh wrecked Spain, by persuading him to maintain an army to aid Austria and Hungary against the incursions of the Turk. Mazarin had died soon after the peace of the Pyrenees, and the new advisers of Louis XIV. were already inciting him to retaliate for

[1] Cartas de Sor Maria.

the Austrian *rapprochement* with Spain by fresh aggression upon Spanish Flanders. Don Juan, bitterly opposed to the new German interest in Spain, retired to his town of Consuegra in disgust and disgrace; the French and English governments assumed a tone of dictatorial haughtiness towards Spain unheard before; and Philip, in declining health and bitter disappointment, could look nowhere now for help and solace: for his minister Haro was dead, and the saintly nun of Agreda, his refuge for so many years, also went to her rest in the spring of 1665. There was no one now at Philip's side but Mariana, already intriguing for uncontrolled power when her husband should die, and her German confessor Nithard, whose one aim was to use what was left of Spanish resources for the ends of Austria.

Others also were on the alert as to what would happen when Philip died, and Sir Richard Fanshawe was sent to Madrid by Charles II., partly to negotiate for the recognition of Portuguese independence; and also: 'to employ his utmost skill and industry in penetrating and discovering under what model and form his Catholic Majesty designs to leave the government there, when it shall please God that he die, which, considering his great infirmity and weakness, may be presumed is already projected.'[1] When Philip first received Fanshawe in June 1664, he was so weak and weary that he could only ask him to put his speech on paper,[2] and thenceforward all Europe regarded the King as a dying man, whose work in the world was done.

[1] Original Letters of Sir R. Fanshawe. January 1664.

[2] An interesting account of this ceremony is given by Lady Fanshawe in her Memoirs.

As Philip sank lower in despondency, the importance of Mariana rose. Lady Fanshawe gives an account of her interview with the Queen on the 27th June 1664, at the Buen Retiro, which shows that Mariana was already regarded almost as the reigning sovereign: 'I was received at the Buen Retiro by the guard, and afterwards, when I came up stairs, by the Marquesa de Hinojosa, the Queen's Camarera Mayor, then in waiting. Through an infinite number of people I passed to the Queen's presence, where her Majesty was seated at the upper end under a cloth of state upon three cushions, and on her left hand the Empress [1] upon three more. The ladies were all standing. After making my last reverence to the Queen, her Majesty and the Empress, rising up and making me a little curtsey, sat down again; then I, by my interpreter, Sir Benjamin Wright, said those compliments that were due from me to her Majesty; to which her Majesty made me gracious and kind reply. Then I presented my children, whom her Majesty received with great grace and favour. Then her Majesty, speaking to me to sit, I sat down upon a cushion laid for me, above all the ladies who sat, but below the Camarera Mayor; no woman taking place (*i.e.* precedence) of her Excellency but princesses. . . . Thus, having passed half an hour in discourse, I took my leave of her Majesty and the Empress; making reverences to all the ladies in passing.' [2] Some months afterwards Queen Mariana sent to the English lady many messages of regard and esteem, with a splendid

[1] This was Mariana's daughter, the Infanta Margaret, so well recollected by Velazquez's portraits of her. She was at this time thirteen years old, and had just been betrothed to the Emperor Leopold, her cousin. She was married two years later, and died in 1673, at the age of twenty-two.

[2] Memoirs of Lady Fanshawe.

diamond ornament worth £2,000, which Lady Fanshawe received with somewhat exaggerated professions of humility, and repeated her thanks to her in an interview soon after (8th April 1655).

The total and final defeat of the Spaniards on the Portuguese frontier, in June 1665, made the recovery of the lost kingdom hopeless, and broke Philip's heart. He had written in the spring to the dying nun, saying that he desired no more health or life than was meet for God's service, and was ready to go when he was called. The call came in September 1665. His chronic malady had been aggravated to such an extent by anxiety and worry, that by the middle of the month his physicians confessed themselves powerless. Then was enacted one of those ghastly farces common at the time in Spain. It was whispered in the palace that the King was bewitched, and the Inquisitor-General called a conference of ecclesiastics to consider the means for exorcising the evil spirits that held the sovereign in bondage. Philip himself gave permission for the Inquisitor to act as might be judged best; and one day the royal confessor, Friar Martinez, accompanied by the Inquisitor-General, approached the sick-bed and demanded of the King a certain little wallet of relics and charms which he always wore suspended upon his breast. After examining these carefully the wallet was returned to the King, and from some clue therein contained, search elsewhere led to the discovery of an ancient black-letter book of magic, and certain prints of the King's portrait transfixed by pins. All these things were solemnly burnt after a service of exorcism by the Inquisitor-General at the chapel of Atocha; and then, to assist the cure, the group of churchmen administered to the King, who was suffer-

ing from several mortal diseases, of which gall-stones caused the immediate danger, an elaborate confection of pounded mallow-leaves with drugs and sugar.

This treatment aggravated the ill, and in two or three days the King appeared to be in *articulo mortis*, after what was described as a fit of apoplexy. The whole Court fell into momentary confusion, and the death-chamber was already deserted when the King revived and altered several of his testamentary dispositions, one clause of which now appointed Mariana regent during the minority of her son. The will, by Philip's orders, was then locked into a leather purse with other important state papers, and the key, by the dying man's orders, was delivered to his wife. That afternoon, after taking the sacrament, Philip bade a tearful farewell to Mariana, and blessed his two children. He then took an affectionate leave of the Duke of Medina de las Torres and other nobles, beseeching them with irrepressible tears to work harmoniously together, and help the widow and the poor child to whom his heavy heritage was passing.

Philip struggled through the night in agony, and the next day the image of the Virgin of Atocha was carried past the windows of the palace to be deposited in the royal Convent of Barefoots hard by, whilst the dead bodies of St. Diego and St. Isidro were brought to the royal chapel for veneration;[1] and every church and convent in Madrid resounded with rogations and processions for the health of the King. Around the bed of the dying monarch evil passions already raged; for the Court was divided thus early into two factions,

[1] It is related that when Philip was asked if the bodies of the saints should be brought into his room he said, 'No, they can intercede in my favour just as well in the chapel as here.'

one in favour of Mariana and the other looking to Don Juan. The Duke of Medina de las Torres, the principal minister, retired from the palace as soon as he had taken leave; and an unseemly wrangle, almost a fight, took place over the death-bed between rival friars, as to whether the viaticum might be administered or not, until they had to be bundled out of the room by the Marquis of Aytona.

No sooner was this scene over than Count Castrillo entered the chamber and announced that Don Juan had come and was waiting to see his father. Philip knew, and bitter the knowledge was, that his wife and son would be in open strife from the day the breath left his body; but that Don Juan should return from exile unbidden, and dared to disobey his King, whilst yet he lived, aroused one more spark of sovereign indignation in the moribund man. 'Tell him,' he said, 'to return whence he came until he be bidden. I will see him not; for this is no time for me to do other than to die.' At early dawn on Friday, 17th September, poor Philip the Great breathed his last. 'And curious it is,' said a contemporary courtier, 'that in the chamber of his Majesty when he died, there was no one but the Marquis of Aytona and two servants to weep for the death of their King and master. In all the rest of the court not one soul shed a tear for him. A terrible lesson is this for all humankind; that a monarch who had granted such great favours and raised so many to honour, had no sigh breathed for him when he died.'[1]

[1] As soon as Philip breathed his last the Marquis of Malpica, who was on duty as principal gentleman-in-waiting and captain of the guard, went to the outer guardroom, and said to the assembled officers: 'Companions, there is no more for us to do here. Go up and guard our King, Charles II.' Philip had died in one of the lower ground-floor rooms of the palace.

The same night the dead body of the King was dressed in a handsome suit of brown velvet, embroidered and trimmed with silver, with the great red sword-cross of Santiago worked upon the breast, preparatory to the pompous lying-in-state in the same gilded hall of the old palace at Madrid, where the comedies the King had loved were so often played before him. At the same time in an adjoining room the Councils of Castile and State gathered to hear the will read by the secretary, Blasco de Loyola, which made Mariana Queen-Regent of Spain, with the assistance of a special council of regency, consisting of the great dignitaries of the State, failing two of whom the Queen might appoint two substitutes, an eventuality which partially occurred within a few hours of Philip's death by the decease of the Cardinal Archbishop of Toledo, Moscoso. Don Juan, who was commended to the widow in the will, waited to hear no more than the elevation of Mariana to the regency, and then took horse with all speed and hurried back to the safe seclusion of his fief of Ocaña. A few days afterwards, the sumptuous lying-in-state being concluded, the body of 'Philip the Great' was carried in a vast procession to the Escorial, to rest for ever in the jasper niche before which he had so often prayed and wept.[1]

The above account is condensed from a contemporary unpublished MS. journal of a courtier in the 'Biblioteca National,' c. xxiv. 4. Lady Fanshawe also gives a very precise account of the lying-in-state, varying in some few details from the MS. narrative above referred to.

[1] My diarist gives another instance of the heartless conduct of the nobles after the King's death. When the body was to be transferred to the Escorial each of the chamberlains and officials insisted that it was not his duty to make the formal surrender, or to help to carry the corpse. The squabble was only ended by the Duke of Medina ordering his cousin Montealegre, to do it.

Mariana, at the age of thirty-one, was now ruler of Spain for her son Charles II., aged four, and she lost no time in showing her tendencies when left to herself. The root of most of the calamities that affected Spain were the traditions that bound it to the imperial house. All that the country needed, even now, was rest, peace and freedom from foreign complications in which Spaniards had no real concern. But Mariana was Austrian to her finger tips; and ever since Philip's health began to fail she had been working for the predominance of her kindred and weakening the bonds of friendship with France, knit by the marriage of Maria Theresa with Louis XIV.

There was already a large party of nobles who, seeing the national need for peace, looked with distrust upon a policy which would still waste Spanish resources in fighting the battles of the empire in mid-Europe: and when to the vacancy in the Council of Regency and the Inquisitor-Generalship, caused by the death of Cardinal Moscoso a few hours after the King, Mariana appointed her Austrian confessor, Father Nithard, Spanish pride flared out and protest became general. Nithard was doubtless a worthy priest, though of no great ability, but if he had been a genius the same detestation of him would have prevailed, for he was a foreigner, and it was guessed at once that between him and the Austrian Queen Spain would be sacrificed as it had been in the past to objects that were not primarily Spanish. Observers abroad saw it too, and although the French envoy who went to condole with Mariana on Philip's death assured her of the desire of Louis to be friendly with her, the first acts of her regency gave to the French King a pretext for asserting his wife's right to the inheritance of

Flanders, as her dowry had not been paid, and her renunciation was asserted to be invalid.

In May 1667 Louis invaded Flanders with 50,000 men, faced only by a small disaffected and unpaid force under the Spanish viceroy, the result being that the French overran the country and captured many principal cities. Don Juan was summoned in a hurry from his exile to the Council of State in Madrid, and he and his sworn enemy Mariana divided between them the sympathies of the capital and the country. Pasquins and satires passed from hand to hand on the Liars' Parade and in the Calle Mayor, mostly attacking Nithard and the Queen, who were blamed for the war; and the relations between Don Juan and Mariana grew more strained every day.

It was also evident now that Spain was powerless to coerce Portugal any longer, and in February the humiliating treaty was signed—mainly by the influence of Fanshawe[1] and Sandwich—in February 1668, recognising the independence of the sister Iberian nation. Louis XIV. carried on his attacks in Flanders with vigour, and rejected all overtures of peace except on terms which aroused Spaniards to indignation. The Spanish Franche Comté was occupied by the French in February 1668; and then, but only by a supreme effort, a fresh army of nine thousand men was collected in Spain to defend her territories. The Austrian friendship was of little use to Spain, as usual, and Castile had once more to fight her own battle. In these circumstances of national peril the influence of Mariana and Nithard on the Council of Regency pro-

[1] Fanshawe died in Spain soon after his recall, Lord Sandwich replacing him to conclude the treaty. See 'Letters of Earl of Sandwich' and 'Fanshawe's Letters.' London.

cured an order for Don Juan to take command of the army and lead it to Flanders against the French, and with an ill grace the royal bastard left Madrid on Palm Sunday, 1668, for his rendezvous at Corunna, where the treasure ships from Cadiz and his troops were to join him. Don Juan saw in this move an intention of getting him away from the centre of government, and the impression was strengthened by the almost simultaneous exile or arrest, on various trivial pretexts, of some of those who were known to sympathise with him, one of whom, Malladas, was strangled in prison by Mariana's orders.

All through the spring Don Juan lagged at Corunna, excusing himself from embarking on various grounds, ill-health being the principal; until, at length, thanks to the intervention of England and Holland, Louis was brought to sign terms of peace with Spain at Aix la Chapelle, in May 1668, that left him in possession of the Flemish territories he had conquered. But still Mariana and Nithard were determined that Don Juan should go and take possession of his government in Flanders, and sent him a peremptory order to embark. This he refused to do, and a decree of the Queen in August directed him to retire to Consuegra, and not approach within sixty miles of Madrid. He had many friends and adherents, especially in Aragon, and his discontent extended to them. Those in Madrid began to clamour that Mariana and Nithard were keeping the little King in the background away from his people, and alienating those who might serve the monarchy best.

Charles II. was now aged seven, and so degenerate and weak a child was he, that he had been up to this period, and continued for some years afterwards, en-

tirely in the hands of women, and treated as an infant in arms. He was dwarfish and puny, with one leg shorter than the other, his gait during the whole of his life being uncertain and staggering. His face was of extraordinary length and ghastly white, the lower jaw being so prodigiously underhung that it was impossible for him to bite or masticate food, or to speak distinctly. His hair was lank and yellow, and his eyes a vague watery blue. This poor creature with his mother at his side, in obedience to the clamour of Don Juan's friends, was first brought out in public for his subjects to see at a series of visits to the convents and churches of Madrid in the summer of 1668.[1] Just as the King and Mariana were about to start from the palace at Madrid on one of these excursions, in October 1668, an officer came in great agitation to the door of the Queen's apartment and prayed for audience. He was told that the coach awaited their Majesties, and the Queen could not see him then, but would receive him when she returned. He begged in the meanwhile to be allowed to stay in a place of safety in the palace. This request made his visit seem important enough for Mariana to be informed of it: and she ordered him to be introduced at once. When he entered he threw himself upon his knees and besought that he might speak with her alone; and for a half hour he was closeted with the Queen.

The story he had to tell was of a widespread conspiracy of Don Juan and his friends against the Regency, and without delay the net was cast that swept into prison one of Don Juan's principal agents

[1] An extremely detailed account of the events that accompanied the feud between Mariana and Don Juan will be found in a rare book called 'Relation of the Differences that happened in the Court of Spain.' London, 1678.

in Madrid, Patiño, and all his household. In a day or two a force of soldiers was despatched to Consuegra to arrest Don Juan himself, but found the bird flown. Behind him he had left a document addressed to the Queen, violently denouncing Nithard as a tyrant and a murderer, whilst protesting his own loyalty to his father's son. Madrid began again to murmur at the persecution of a Spanish prince in Spain by a foreign Jesuit, and though a brisk interchange of manifestoes and recriminatory pamphlets was carried on, the great mass of the people were unquestionably on the side of Don Juan against the German Queen and her Jesuit favourite.

The Prince fled to Barcelona, where Nithard was especially hated and the Madrid government always unpopular, and there nobles and people received Don Juan with enthusiasm. Messages of support came to him from all parts of Spain, and French money and sympathy powerfully aided his propaganda, so that by the end of the year 1668 affairs looked dangerous for Mariana and her confessor. The Queen and her Camarilla took fright and tried conciliation, but Don Juan knew that he had the whip hand, and in a letter written in November to Mariana peremptorily demanded the dismissal of Nithard within fifteen days. Mariana's friends on the Council of Regency voted for the impeachment of Don Juan for high treason; and for a time vigorous measures against him were like to be taken. But the Council of Castile, the supreme judicial authority, through its most influential member, warned the Queen that in a controversy between the King's brother and a foreign Jesuit Spaniards must necessarily be on the side of the former, and the Queen must be cautious or she would alienate the country

from her. Mariana thereupon wrote softly to Don Juan inviting him to approach Madrid that a conference of conciliation might be held. But the prince would not trust Nithard, who, he said, had planned his murder, and he declined to risk coming to the capital except in his own time and way.

Early in February 1669, Don Juan, with a fine bodyguard of two hundred horse, rode out of Barcelona, and through Catalonia and Aragon towards Madrid. Mariana had sent strict orders throughout the country that no honours were to be paid to him, but his journey in spite of her was a triumphal progress, and as he entered Saragossa in state the whole populace received him with shouts of: 'Long live Don Juan of Austria, and Death to the Jesuit Nithard.' A regiment of infantry was added by Aragon to the Prince's force, and on the 24th February Mariana and her friend in the palace of Madrid were horrified to learn that Don Juan was at the gates of the capital with an armed body stronger than any at their prompt disposal. Whilst they made such hasty preparations as they could to resist, all Madrid was in open jubilation at the approach of their favourite prince. Don Juan's force grew from hour to hour, and with it grew his haughtiness towards the ruling authority. Mariana, in alarm, tried every means. The Nuncio endeavoured to soften Don Juan's heart; the higher nobles in the Queen's household wrote to him deprecating violence; and, finally, the Queen herself wrote a letter of kindly welcome. But to all blandishments Don Juan stood firm: Father Nithard must go for good, and at once; whilst the Council of Castile also demanded the Jesuit's expulsion.

On the morning of 25th February, whilst Mariana

was still in bed, the courtyards of the palace filled with gentlemen and officials in groups, who openly declared for Don Juan and the expulsion of Nithard. The Dukes of Infantado and Pastrana sought an interview with the Queen, for the purpose of informing her of the general resolution, but were refused admittance into her bedchamber. They then charged her secretary, Loyola, to inform her, that unless she instantly signed a decree expelling Nithard they themselves would take measures against him, as Madrid was in a turmoil and order imperilled. Mariana with tears of rage swore that she would not be coerced; and Nithard himself refused to stir. A hasty meeting of the Council of Regency assembled in the forenoon, which Nithard abstained from attending only upon the entreaty of the Nuncio, where a decree of expulsion was drafted in the mildest form possible, and laid before the Queen for signature as soon as she had dined.

Mariana was at the end of her tether. The Court, the populace, and the soldiery were all against her favourite, and she was forced to sign the decree. But, though she did it, she never forgave Don Juan for the humiliation, and thenceforward it was war to the knife between them. Cardinal Nithard, with rich grants and gifts from the Queen, was with difficulty saved from the cursing multitude that surrounded his coach as he slunk out of the capital; and Don Juan, triumphant, begged for permission to come and salute the Queen in thanks for his expulsion. This, haughty Mariana coldly refused to allow, and Don Juan retorted by demanding a thorough reform in the administration of the government, a re-adjustment of taxation and many other innovations which he alleged

that Nithard alone had prevented. The Spanish nobles, however, were no lovers of reform, and Don Juan's drastic demands were regarded askance by many. A long acrimonous correspondence was carried on by the Queen at Madrid and Don Juan at Guadalajara, in the course of which some financial amendments were promised by the former: but in the meantime Mariana's friends were raising an armed force as a bodyguard for her and her son, which afterwards became famous as the *Chambergo* regiment, because the uniform was copied from those worn by the troops of Marshal Schomberg. The formation of this standing force was bitterly resented by the citizens of Madrid, and aroused new sympathy for Don Juan. At length a semi-reconciliation was effected by the appointment of Don Juan as Viceroy of Aragon in June 1669; and for several years thereafter the Prince was piling up funds from his rich offices to strike a more effectual blow when the time should come.

The extreme debility of the boy King, who in 1670 was thought to be moribund, was already dividing the courtiers, and indeed all Spain and Europe, into two camps. If Charles II. died without issue, as seemed probable, his elder sister Maria Theresa, wife of Louis XIV., would be his natural successor, but for the act of renunciation signed at the time of her marriage; an act which from the first the French had minimised and disputed, and Philip himself had characterised as an 'old wife's tale.' It was evident that Louis XIV., daily growing in power and ambition, had no intention of allowing the renunciation to stand in the way of his wife's claims if her brother died childless; and all of Mariana's enemies in Spain, and they were many, were

ready to stand by the claims of the elder Infanta Maria Teresa, daughter of the beloved Isabel of Bourbon, if the succession fell into dispute.

On the other hand, Mariana, naturally championed the cause of her own daughter, the Infanta Margaret, married to the Emperor Leopold, and upheld the validity of Maria Theresa's formal renunciation of the succession on her marriage. The Austrian connection had brought nothing but trouble to Spain, and the brilliant progress of France, even though it was to the detriment of their country, had gained many Spanish admirers of the modern spirit that pervaded the methods of Louis XIV. Mariana, therefore, to most Spaniards, represented, with her pronounced Austrian leanings, an attempt to tie the country to the bad old times, as well as to pass over the legitimate rights of the elder Infanta for the benefit of her own less popular daughter the Empress Margaret.

The Queen-Mother, well aware of the strong party against her, and that her prime enemy, Don Juan, was only awaiting his time to strike at her, employed all the resources she could scrape together in providing for her own defence against her domestic opponents, leaving the frontier fortresses divested of troops and means for repelling attack from France; whilst, on the other hand, she provoked Louis by sending a Spanish contingent to co-operate with the Emperor's troops in aiding the Dutch in their war with France; and, later, in 1673, she formed a regular alliance with the Emperor and Holland against Louis XIV. Nothing could have been more imprudent than this in the circumstances, for Spain was in a worse condition of exhaustion than ever, and the hope of beating France by force had long ago proved fallacious. The ancient

appanage of Burgundy, the Franche Comté, promptly passed for ever from the dominion of Spain to that of France; and whilst the fighting in Flanders and the Catalan frontier was progressing in 1674, a new trouble assailed Mariana's government. The island of Sicily revolted, and invited the French to assume the sovereignty, an invitation that was promptly accepted. Thirty-seven years before, when he was a mere stripling, Don Juan had recovered Naples for Spain in similar circumstances; and Mariana, almost in despair, could only beseech her enemy to leave his government at Saragossa, and take command of the Spanish-Dutch forces to attack the French in Sicily. But Don Juan, knowing her desire to get him out of the way, was determined not to allow himself to be sent far from the centre of affairs, and refused to accept the position.

His reasons were well founded, for events were passing in Mariana's palace that rendered her more unpopular than ever; and, by the will of Philip IV., her regency would come to an end when her son attained his fifteenth year late in the next year 1675. It had been hoped that with the banishment of Nithard and the absence from the capital of Don Juan, the factions that divided the Court would have held their peace during the few years the regency lasted; and possibly this would have been the case if the Queen had been prudent. Her unwise favour to Nithard had already made her extremely unpopular, for foreign Queens in Spain were always suspect; but she had learned nothing from her favourite's ignominious expulsion; and soon a confidant, less worthy far than Nithard, had completely captured the good graces of the Queen. This was a young gentleman of no fortune named Fernando de Valenzuela. He was one of those facile,

plausible, Andaluces, a native of Ronda, who had figured so brilliantly in the Court of Philip IV. and Mariana, where the accomplishment of deftly turning amorous verse, improvising a dramatic interlude, or contriving a stinging epigram, opened a way to fortune. He had been a member of the household of the Duke of Infantado, and upon the death of the latter, had attached himself to Father Nithard, who needed the aid of such men.

Valenzuela was not only keen and clever, but extremely handsome, in the black-eyed Moorish style of beauty, for which the people of Ronda are famous, and he soon managed to gain the full confidence of both Nithard and the Queen, whom he served as a go-between and messenger, a function which he continued after the Jesuit had been expelled. He had married the Queen's favourite half-German maid, and had been appointed a royal equerry; both of which circumstances gave a pretext for his continual presence in the palace; and at the time of the agitation against Nithard, and afterwards, he had been extremely useful in conveying to the Queen all the comments that could be picked up by sharp ears in the Calle Mayor and Liars' Parade (the peristyle of the Church of St. Philip). It was noticed that those who spoke incautiously of the Queen in public were promptly denounced and brought to trouble, and the gossips soon pitched upon Valenzuela as the spy, calling him in consequenee by the nickname, by which he was generally known, of the 'fairy of the palace.' The man was bold, ambitious, and unscrupulous, and soon more than occupied the place left vacant by Nithard.

Jealous nobles and courtiers looked with indignation at the rapid rise of a mere provincial adventurer to

the highest places in the State. Not only was a marquisite and high commands and offices conferred upon him, but at a time when Spain was in the midst of a great international war that ended in the remodelling of the map of Europe at her expense, this favourite, without special aptitude or experience, was appointed by Mariana her universal minister for all affairs; and Valenzuela was the most powerful man in Spain. He manfully did his best though unsuccessfully, for he was cordially detested, to win popularity in an impossible position, by multiplying in Madrid the feasts and diversions its inhabitants loved, by writing comedies himself, full of wit and malice, for gratis representation in the theatres, by re-building public edifices, and generally beautifying the capital. He was surrounded, moreover, by a great crowd of parasites, mostly nobodies, like himself, who sang his praises for the plunder he could pour upon them.

But his rise was too rapid, and his origin too obscure to be easily forgiven, and a perfect deluge of satires, verses, pamphlets and flying sheets, full of gross libels upon him and the Queen, came from the secret presses and circulated throughout Spain. The general opinion was that he was the Queen's lover as well as her minister; but Madrid was always a hotbed of scandal, and, although this may well have been true, it must be regarded as non-proven. As a specimen of the view taken of the connection by contemporaries the following description of a broad-sheet, found one morning posted on the walls of the palace, may be given. A portrait of the Queen is represented with her hand pointing to her heart, with the printed legend, 'This is given;' whilst Valenzuela is pourtrayed standing close by her side, pointing to the insignias and emblems

of his many high offices, and saying, 'These are sold.' The favourite himself seems to have been anxious to strengthen the rumour that assigned to him the amorous affection of the widowed Queen, for at two of the Court festivals, of which he promoted many, he bore as his devices, 'I alone have licence,' and 'To me alone is it allowed.'[1]

The unrestrained favour extended by the Queen to such an upstart as this gave hosts of new adherents to Don Juan; and such of them as had access to the young King, now rapidly approaching his legal majority, took care to paint the wretched condition of the country in the blackest colours, and to ascribe the trouble to the Queen's bad minister. The boy, though nearly fifteen, was still a child; backward and, at best, almost an idiot. He could hardly read or write, for the weakness of his wits and the degeneracy of his physique had caused his education to be entirely neglected, and he was, even in his mature age, grossly ignorant of the simplest facts. But, like his father, he was gentle, kind and good-hearted, and his compassion was easily aroused by the sad stories told him of the sufferings of his people, especially when they came from the lips of his father confessor, Montenegro, and his trusted tutor Ramos del Manzano.

They, and the great nobles who prompted them, understood that the moment had come for action when, in the late autumn of 1675, Mariana and Valenzuela ordered Don Juan to sail in Ruyter's fleet to Sicily and eject the French; and what to them was just as important, leave them with no rivals near them when the King came of age. Charles was persuaded by his confessor, and without the know-

[1] Montero de los Rios, 'Historia de Madrid.'

ledge of his mother, to sign a letter recalling his half-brother to Madrid; and with this in his hand Don Juan could refuse, as he did, to sail for Sicily. On the morning of 6th November 1675, the day that Charles reached his fifteenth year and the regency ended, Madrid was astir early to see the shows that were to celebrate the new reign, though the country, in its utter exhaustion and misery, was in no spirit to rejoice now.

To the surprise of most was seen a royal travelling carriage rapidly approach the Buen Retiro palace, and the escort that surrounded it proclaimed that the occupant of the coach was no other than Don Juan. All was prepared for the coup d'etat. The prince hurried, unknown to Mariana, to the young King's apartment, and kneeling, kissed the boy's hand; whilst a decree, already drafted, was presented to the King, appointing his half-brother the universal minister of the crown. Mariana had passed the night at the palace a mile away, but the coming of her enemy to the Buen Retiro had been announced to her before he alighted. Without losing a moment she flew to the Retiro and reached her son's room just as the decree that would have ruined her was about to be signed. She was an imperious woman, and had been Queen-Regent of Spain for over ten years: her control of her feeble son had been supreme whilst she was with him, and her angry orders that the room should be cleared might not be gainsaid. Left alone with her son, she led him to a private room and, with tears and indignant reproaches, reduced the poor lad to a condition of abject submission to her will.

The president of the Council of Castile had already told her, that as Don Juan had come by the King's

warrant, the same authority alone could send him back, and Charles was induced to sign a decree commanding the prince to return forthwith to his government in Aragon and remain there till further orders. Now was the time when boldness on the part of Don Juan would have won the day; for the nobles, court and people, were mostly on his side against Valenzuela and the Queen, whose means did not allow them to bribe everybody. But Don Juan was as vain and empty as he was ambitious and failed to rise to the occasion. The sacrosanct character of the King of Castile, moreover, was still a strong tradition, and Don Juan, who knew his fellow-countrymen well, dared not aim at ruling instead of the King, but through the King. So that night Don Juan and his supporters met in conclave, and weakly decided to obey the King's new command without protest, instead of making another attempt to over-ride Mariana's influence upon her son; and the prince returned to Aragon overwhelmed with confusion and disappointment.[1]

The triumph of Mariana was complete, and she took no pains to conceal her joy when she attended that night in state the theatre of the Buen Retiro, in celebration of the King's coming of age. In a few days all those who had had a hand in the futile conspiracy were on their way to exile; and, to keep up appearances, Valenzuela himself was given the rich post of Admiral of the Andalucian coast, with another rich marquisate, as an excuse for his absence from the capital during the first few weeks of the King's majority. He was soon back again, collecting new honours from the feeble King at the instance of

[1] 'Diario de los Sucesos de la Corte.' MS. in the Royal Academy of History, Madrid.

Mariana, and to the indignation of the other nobles. The great post of Master of the Horse, usually held by one of the first magnates of Spain, was given to Valenzuela; and when the jealous grandees remonstrated he was made a grandee of Spain of the first class to match his new dignity. All this, and the fact that Don Juan had been deprived of his viceroyalty, though banished from Court, may testify to Mariana's determination and boldness, but says little for her prudence; for all Spain, high and low, was against her, and Valenzuela was a weak reed to depend upon in the face of so powerful an opposition.

In the meanwhile the conspiracy against Mariana grew in strength. Don Juan amongst his faithful Aragonese could plot with impunity, whilst the nobles in Madrid were working incessantly to the same ends, namely, the banishment of Mariana and the impeachment and punishment of Valenzuela. In February 1676 all the principal grandees signed a mutual pledge to stand together until these objects were attained; and as, in virtue of their position, they had unrestrained access to the King, who was now nominally his own master, the result of their efforts was soon seen.

The object lesson to which they could point was a very plain one. Spanish troops were still pouring out their blood upon the battlefields of Europe without benefit to Spain: the distress in the capital itself was appalling; even the King's household sometimes being without food, or means of obtaining it. On every side ruin had overwhelmed the people. Industry had been crushed by taxation, whole districts were depopulated and derelict, and neither life nor property was safe from the bandits who defied the law in town and

country.[1] Spain had almost, though not quite, reached its nadir of decadence: and, though the distress was really the result of longstanding causes described in the earlier pages of this book, the boy monarch was made to believe that it all arose from the misgovernment of his mother and Valenzuela; and that Don Juan could remedy all the ills and make Spain strong and happy again.

The noble conspirators took care, this time, to neglect no precautions that might ensure success, and obtained (27th December 1676) from the King an order to which Mariana was obliged to consent, for Don Juan to return to Madrid; whilst on various pretexts they kept the Queen as much as possible from influencing her son. Valenzuela was, of course, informed of what was going on, and, recognising that the coalition was strong enough to crush him, had suddenly fled into hiding a few days previously. The night of the 14th January 1677, after the King had retired to his bedchamber in the palace of Madrid, and Mariana doubtless thought that all was safe until the next morning, Charles, accompanied by a single gentleman-in-waiting, escaped by arrangement with the conspirators, down backstairs and through servants doorways, from the old palace to the Buen Retiro, where the nobles and courtiers were assembled. Long before dawn a decree reached Mariana in her bedroom in the palace, ordering her not to leave her apartments without the written permission of the King. Her rage and indignation knew no bounds, and for the rest of the night letters alternately denouncing the unduti-

[1] A full description of the condition of Spain at the period, drawn from many contemporary sources, is given in 'Spain, Its Greatness and Decay,' by Martin Hume (Cambridge University Press).

fulness, and appealing to the affection of her son, showered thick and fast from the Queen in the old Alcazar to the sixteen year old boy with the long white face, who was trying to play the King in the pleasance of the Buen Retiro. None of her letters softened him, if ever they reached him, which is doubtful, and all the next day the antechambers at the Retiro were crowded with courtiers, applauding the King's stroke of State, whilst in the Alcazar on the cliff the Queen mother found herself neglected by flatterers, a prisoner in the palace where she had reigned so long.

The next day news came that Don Juan, with a great armed escort and household, had arrived at Hita, thirty-five miles from the capital; and there the Cardinal Archbishop of Toledo and a crowd of grandees met him with a message from the King, asking him to dismiss his armed men and come to Court for the purpose of taking the direction of affairs. But Don Juan had his conditions to make first, and he refused to enter the capital until Mariana had left it, Valenzuela made a prisoner, and the hated Chambergo regiment disbanded. He had his way in all things, and the same night, with rage in her heart, Mariana rode out of the capital for her banishment at Toledo; the Chambergos were hurried away for shipment to Sicily; and then came the question where was Valenzuela. Reluctantly, and bit by bit, it was drawn from the King that he himself had contrived the flight of his mother's favourite, and knew where he was hidden amongst the friars of the palace-monastery of the Escorial.

From his windows overlooking the bleak Sierra of Guadarrama the fugitive favourite gazed in the gathering dusk of the 17th January 1677 in fancied security; when, to his dismay, a large body of cavalry

trotted into the courtyard and dominated the palace. Amongst them the alarmed Valenzuela descried his enemy the Duke of Medina Sidonia, and a group of other grandees. Flying for refuge within the consecrated precincts, he besought the prior to save him; and when the doors of the monastery had been closed the prior greeted the troops and nobles in the courtyard and demanded their pleasure. 'We want nothing,' they replied, 'but that you will deliver to us the traitor Valenzuela.' 'Have you an order from his Majesty?' asked the prior. 'Only a verbal one,' replied Don Antonio de Toledo, son of the Duke of Alba, who took the lead. 'In that case,' replied the monk, supported by a murmur of approval from his brethren behind, 'we will not surrender him, except to main force; for we shelter him by written warrant of the King.' Threats and insults failed to move the monks, and an attempt at arrangement was at last made by means of an interview in the church between Valenzuela himself and the Duke of Medina Sidonia and Toledo. Owing mainly to the violence of the latter the interview had no result; and, as the prior saw that the soldiery were preparing to force the sanctuary, Valenzuela was hidden in a secret room contrived for such eventualities where he might defy discovery. The enraged nobles and soldiery, balked of their prey, ransacked the enormous place, room by room, for three days, overturning altars, insulting and violating the privacy of the monks, and committing sacrilege undreamt of in Spain for centuries, for which they were smartly punished afterwards by the ecclesiastical authority.[1]

[1] The nobles and leaders were all excommunicated, and not even the King's intercession could mollify the Pope until full reparation was made at tremendous cost, and penance done in most humiliating fashion.

At length, on the night of 21st January, Valenzuela took fright at some voices near, and foolishly let himself down by his twisted sheets from the window of his safe retreat; and, though one sentry let him go, and the monks made desperate attempts to keep him hidden, he was captured on the 22nd January and carried with every circumstance of ignominy to close confinement in Don Juan's fortress of Consuegra; then after terrible sufferings and stripped of all his honours and possessions, he was imprisoned in Manila, and afterwards taken to Mexico to die; whilst his unfortunate wife, treated with atrocious brutality by Toledo, was reduced to beg from door to door for charity, until her troubles drove her mad.[1] No sooner was Valenzuela safe behind the bars at Consuegra than Don Juan of Austria entered Madrid in state on the 23rd January, acclaimed by the populace as the saviour of

[1] The contemptible instability of the King is seen in a conversation he had with the prior of the Escorial the day after Valenzuela's capture. The prior had been formerly urged most earnestly by Charles to shelter and defend the favourite, and a written warrant to that effect was given. As no written order for his capture was exhibited the Prior presented himself before the King to explain what had been done. Before he could speak Charles giggled and said, 'So they caught him!' 'Yes, sire, they caught him,' replied the prior. 'And his wife too?' asked the King. 'His wife is now in Madrid, sire, and I come now to crave mercy and protection for both of them.' 'For his wife but not for him,' said Charles. 'But surely your Majesty will not abandon your unhappy minister in this sad strait.' 'You may take it from me,' replied Charles, 'that a holy woman has had a revelation from God that Valenzuela was to be captured at the Escorial.' 'A revelation of the devil more likely,' blurted out the disgusted prior. 'And pray do not think, sire, that I am interceding for Valenzuela for interests of my own: I never got anything from him in the world but this benzoin lozenge.' With this Charles jumped back in a fright. 'Put it away! put it away!' he cried. 'Perhaps it is witchcraft or poison.'

(The narrative is from an MS. relation written by one of the monks at the time, and now in the Escorial Library. Portions of it have been quoted by Don Modesto Lafuente, 'Historia de Espana,' vol. xii.)

Spain, and welcomed by the King as the heaven-sent minister who was to make his reign brilliant and successful. Don Juan's vengeance knew no limit, as his soul knew no generosity. Whatever may have been Mariana's faults as a Queen of Spain, or her errors as a diplomatist, the ignominy to which she was now subjected by order of her son, at the instance of Don Juan, shows the lack of generosity of the latter and the miserable weakness of the former. Mariana's turn was to come again by and bye, but with her banishment to Toledo her life as ruling Queen of Spain came to an end. She lived nearly twenty years afterwards, but her vicissitudes during that time may be told more fittingly in connection with the lives of her two successors, the wives of her afflicted son.

BOOK V

I

MARIE LOUISE OF ORLEANS

BOOK V.

With Mariana, closely watched in her convent at Toledo, and all her friends exiled from Court, Don Juan of Austria reigned supreme. For years he had been clamouring for reform, and holding up as a terrible example of the results of mis-government the utter prostration that had seized upon the nation. This was his chance, and he missed it; for he, whom a whole people had acclaimed as the strong man that was to redeem Spain from the sins and errors of the past, proved in power to be a jealous vindictive trifler, incapable of great ideas or statesmanlike action. Every supporter of the Queen-Mother, from the highest to the lowest, was made to feel the persecution of Don Juan; letters from Toledo were opened, spies listened at every corner, and violated the sanctity of every home, in the anxiety of the Prince to discover plots against him. His pride exceeded all bounds, and most of his time was occupied in intrigues to secure for himself the treatment due to a royal prince of legitimate birth.

Whilst Don Juan was engaged in these trifles and equally futile government measures, such as endeavouring by decree to make the courtiers dress in the French fashion instead of Spanish, the taxes were as heavy as before, the prices of food higher than ever, the administration remained unreformed, and the law was still contemned: the Spanish troops were being beaten by the French in Catalonia for lack of support, and King

Louis still occupied Sicily. Don Juan's own supporters, too, soon got tired of him when they saw that he was grudging of rewards, even to them; and pasquins and pamphlets rained against him and in favour of the Queen-Mother. The latter and the imperial ambassador had, before the coming of Don Juan, betrothed the King to his niece the Archduchess Marie Antoinette, aged nine, the daughter of the Emperor; as if the miserable Charles himself had not been a sufficient warning against further consanguineous marriages in the house of Austria: but Don Juan promptly put an end to that arrangement, and proposed to marry Charles to a little Portuguese Infanta of similar age. Peace was now an absolute necessity to all Europe. The pourparlers between the powers at Nimeguen had already lasted two years, and ended in an arrangement between Holland and France, in which Spain was left out. Louis could then exact his own terms; and, as usual, they were crushingly hard on Spain, which lost some of the richest cities in Flanders and all the Franche Comté (September 1678). But it was peace, and the rejoicing of the overburdened Spanish people was pathetic to witness.

Charles was seventeen years of age, and already his country was speculating eagerly upon his marriage; whilst his degeneracy and weakness aroused hopes and fears of what might happen if he died without issue. According to the will of Philip IV., the succession fell to the Empress Margaret, daughter of Mariana; but the French King, who from the first had made light of his wife's renunciation of her Spanish birthright, and Maria Theresa herself, were not inclined to let her claims go by default. Soon the gossips in Madrid began to whisper that a French Queen Consort, a

descendant of the house which had given them their beloved Isabel of Bourbon, would suit Spain best, and Don Juan himself was not unwilling to listen to such a suggestion; for, in any case, the King must marry, and a French match would be a blow against Mariana and the Austrian connection. The Duke of Medina Celi, Don Juan's principal henchman, slept, as sumiller de corps, in the King's room; and it was he who first broached to Charles the idea of a French wife. He was, the Duke reminded him, a grown man now, and the Austrian Archduchess of ten was too young for him. The Princess of Portugal, he said, would never be consented to by the French, and she was also too youthful: but there was at St. Cloud the most lovely Princess ever seen, only a year younger than himself, who was a bride for the greatest king in the world.[1]

Her name was Marie Louise, and she was the daughter of the brother of King Louis, the Duke of Orleans, by Henriette of England, that beautiful daughter of Charles I. who had been so beloved in the country of her adoption. Maria Theresa took care that miniatures of her lovely niece should go to the Spanish Court, and when one of them was brought to the notice of the young King, his adolescent passion was inflamed at once, and the Marquis de los Balbeses, who had represented Spain at the conference of Nimeguen, was instructed by Don Juan to proceed to Paris and ask King Louis for the hand of his niece.

Marie Louise was a spoilt beauty of the most refined and gayest court in Europe. She had when a child

[1] 'Memoires touchans le mariage de Charles II. avec Marie Louise,' from which many of details related in the text concerning the marriage in France and the journey to the frontier are taken.

lost her English mother; but every body was in love with her, from King Louis downward; and it had long been understood that she might marry the Dauphin, with whom she was on the tenderest terms of affection. But the treaties of Nimeguen had transformed the face of Europe, and Louis had other views for his son, whilst the need for securing a footing in Spain during the critical period approaching was evident. So, when Balbeses came to Paris with unusual state, and Saint Germain and Saint Cloud were a blaze of magnificence to receive him, the girl's heart sank; for with her precocious intelligence she guessed the meaning of the whispers and curious glances that greeted her every appearance in the ceremonies in honour of the King of Spain's ambassador.

She and the Dauphin were deeply in love with each other, and had been so since childhood; and it was like a sentence of death for the beautiful girl with the burnished copper-brown hair and flashing eyes, to learn that she was to be the bride of the long-faced, pallid boy, with the monstrous jaw and dull stare, in his gloomy palace far away from brilliant Versailles, and from her own home at Saint Cloud. When her father, the Duke of Orleans, and afterwards King Louis himself, gravely told her the honour that was in store for her, she implored them in an agony of passionate tears to save her from such a fate. To her stepmother, Charlotte of Bavaria, to the Queen Maria Theresa, to the King, she appealed on her knees, again and again, to let her stay in France, where she was so happy; and not to send her far away amongst people she did not love. She was told that her duty was to France; and Colbert, by the order of King

Louis, drew up a serious State paper for the instruction of the frightened girl in the manner that French interests might be served by her as Queen of Spain.

The fine pearl necklace, worth a hundred thousand crowns, given to her by King Louis, the magnificent diamonds brought by the Duke of Pastrana,[1] as a present to her from her future husband, the title of Majesty, ostentatiously given to her as soon as preliminaries were arranged, the fine dresses and jewels, and the new deference with which she was surrounded, only deepened the girl's grief. Her heart grew hard and her spirit reckless when she understood that, regardless of her own feelings, she was to be a sacrifice: and, as the pompous ceremony of her marriage by proxy approached, she became outwardly calm, and more proudly beautiful than ever. On the 30th August 1679, as the new Queen was led by her father on one hand and the Dauphin she loved on the other, into the principal saloon at Fontainebleau for the formal betrothal to the Prince of Conti, representing the King of Spain, all the Court was enraptured at her peerless loveliness. Her train, seven yards long, of cloth of gold, was borne by princesses of the blood; and the magnificence that the Roi

[1] On the return of the Duke of Pastrana to Spain after the marriage at Fontainebleau, Marie Louise sent by him her first letter to her husband. I have had the good fortune to come across this hitherto unpublished letter in the Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid. It is badly written, in a great smeared school hand, evidently copied from a draft. I transcribe it here in full: 'Monseigneur. Je ne puis laisser partir le duc de Pastrana sans tesmoigner à votre Majesté l'impatience que j'ai d'avoir l'honneur de la voir. Je suplie en mesme temps votre Majesté d'estre bien persuadée du respect que j'ai pour elle et de l'attachement inviolable avec lequel je serai toute ma vie, Monseigneur, de votre Majesté la tres humble et tres observante, Marie Louise.'

Soleil loved so well found its centre in the jewels that blazed over the young Princess who was being sacrificed for France.

It would be tedious to recount the splendour of the betrothal, and marriage the next day, 31st August,[1] but when, after the ceremony with Conti that made Marie Louise the wife of Charles II., she left the chapel in her royal crown, her purple velvet robe lined with ermine and covered with golden fleurs de lis, and her flashing gems enveloping her in light, King Louis and his Queen, between whom she walked in the procession, praised and soothed her as the most perfect princess and queen in the world. At the State concert and ball that night, and at the ceremonies of the morrow, Marie Louise was radiant in her loveliness, and shed no tears, for she was steeled now to the sacrifice, and determined thenceforward to get as much sensuous joy out of life as she could, in spite of the fate that had befallen her.

Whilst this was happening in Fontainebleau, the plot was thickening in Madrid. The star of Don Juan was visibly on the wane. The adherents of Mariana grew bolder daily; some of them, like the Duke of Osuna, dared to come to Court in spite of prohibition; and Don Juan lived in daily fear that the King would slip through his hands and join his mother in Toledo. In order to divert him from visiting Aranjuez, which is within riding distance of Toledo, all sorts of pretexts were invented, and the surveillance of the old Queen by Don Juan's agents became more insulting than ever. Mme. D'Aulnoy narrates a conversation with

[1] They are described with the minuteness of a milliner's bill in 'Descripcion de las circunstancias esenciales . . . en la funcion de los desposorios del Rey N. S. Don Carlos II.' Madrid, 1679.

Don Juan at the time, which may well be authentic.[1] 'She asked him if it was true that the Queen-Mother had written to the King requesting him to see her, and that he had refused. The prince admitted that it was, and that this was the sole reason that had prevented his Majesty from going to Aranjuez, for fear that she might go there and see him, in spite of the orders given to her not to leave Toledo. "What, sir," I cried; "The King refuses to see his mother!" "Say rather," he replied, "that reasons of State prevent monarchs from following their own inclinations when they clash with the public interest. We have a maxim in the Council of State always to be guided by the spirit of the great Emperor Charles v. in all difficult questions."' . . . 'It was quite evident to me,' concludes Mme. D'Aulony, 'that Don Juan accommodated the genius of Charles v. to suit his own.'[2]

Don Juan had grown colder towards the French match as time went on. He had, indeed, endeavoured more than once to obstruct or frustrate it by suggesting impossible conditions; but even Charles II. had plucked up some semblance of manhood with his approaching marriage to the original of the portrait that had so enraptured him, and gave his half-brother

[1] Mme. D'Aulnoy's celebrated 'Voyage D'Espagne' is usually quoted largely for local colour in the histories and romances of this period. I am, however, of opinion that very little credit can be given to it, so far as the authoress's own adventures are concerned. I have grave doubts indeed, whether Mme. D'Aulnoy went to Spain at all. Much of her information is easily traceable to other books, and the rest, apart from the love romances that occupy so many of her pages, may well have been gathered from her cousin, who was married to a Spanish nobleman. The cousin is represented as a friend of Don Juan, and the conversation very likely did take place with her, as Mme. D'Aulnoy represents, though perhaps the latter was not present.

[2] 'Voyage d'Espagne.' La Haye, 1692.

to understand that he meant to have his own way, in this and in other things.[1] Don Juan had very soon understood that the appearance of Marie Louise in Spain, with the influence of Louis XIV. behind her, would mean his own downfall; and the arrival of the Marquis of Villars, the French ambassador, with instructions from his master not to accede to the ambitious claims of Don Juan to receive the ambassador seated and to give his hand as a royal prince, led to infinite negotiation. Louis was determined that the bastard of Philip IV. should not be treated by his ambassador as royal, unless his own illegitimate offspring enjoyed the same privilege; and Villars was instructed not to negotiate with Don Juan at all unless he gave way.[2] Louis also instructed Villars to proceed to Toledo and salute Mariana; and Don Juan knew that with the Queen-mother's interest, the French interest, and most of Spain against him, his government was doomed to an early extinction.

The knowledge killed him; and before Marie Louise had reached the Spanish frontier the news came to her that Don Juan was dead, 17th September. He had suffered for many weeks from double tertian fevers, and his anxiety had increased the malady. The King, he knew, was already holding conferences of nobles, plotting to escape to his mother and decree his half-brother's dismissal. On all sides those upon whom he had depended now opposed him, and some of his old enemies had already claimed the right, in virtue of their rank and offices, to go and attend the new

[1] When he consented to the return of some of Mariana's friends to Court he was told that Don Juan would object. 'What does that matter?' he replied. 'I wish it, and that is enough.'

[2] 'Recueil des Instructions aux Ambassadeurs de France (Espagne).' Paris, 1894.

Queen. In these circumstances it is not necessary to seek, as many contemporaries did, to explain his death by accusations against Mariana and her friends of poisoning him; but there is no denying that his death was most opportune for them, and was welcome to the whole nation, as ensuring some degree of harmony under the new regime that was to commence with the King's marriage. Don Juan's dying ears were dinned by the explosion of fireworks from his own windows, in celebration of the wedding at Fontainebleau, so little regard was paid to him; and hardly had the breath left his body when Charles ran to seek his mother at Toledo, and, with tears and embraces on both sides, a reconciliation was effected. It had all been the wicked bastard's fault, and henceforward all would go well.

Mariana managed her triumphant return with tact and skill. She had left the Court after Valenzuela's fall intensely unpopular; but much had happened since then. Don Juan had proved a whitened sepulchre; the detested Austrian match for the King was at an end, the cordiality shown by Mariana towards the new marriage pleased the people, and a warm welcome greeted her as she rode in state by her son's side in the great swaying coach with the curtains drawn back,[1] to the palace of the Buen Retiro which was to be her residence until her own house was prepared.

All the Court was eager to know what part Mariana would in future take in the government. Would she

[1] The leather or damask curtains of the coaches were usually kept closed except by confessedly immodest women; but on such occasions as these, they were sometimes opened to satisfy the crowd, who wished to welcome royal persons.

be, as of yore, the sole dispenser of bounty and the only fountain of power? Would she avenge herself upon Don Juan's friends as he had avenged himself upon hers, or would she leave the dominating influence to her son's young wife? Mariana had learnt wisdom by experience, and walked warily. She was no lover of the French match; but she knew that open opposition to it would alienate the King and exasperate the country, and she smilingly played the part of the fond mother who rejoiced at her son's happiness. Everybody, moreover, and especially the King, was so busy with the marriage that there was neither time nor inclination for politics; and until the King's departure to meet his bride he was closeted every day in loving converse with his mother, talking only of his coming happiness. Fortunately the treasure-fleet from America arrived in the nick of time, and, for a wonder, there was no lack of money, which not only added to the good humour of the people, but enabled the preparations for the reception of Marie Louise on the Spanish side to be made upon a scale approaching the costly pageantry of former times.

The splendid entertainments at Fontainebleau ended at last; and on the 20th September 1679, the young Queen rode out of the beautiful park on the first stage of the long voyage to her new country. She sat silently in the coach with King Louis and his wife, and the one man upon whom her heart was set, the young Dauphin, whose eyes were red with tears. At La Chapelle, two leagues from Fontainebleau, the long cavalcade stopped, for here Marie Louise was to take an eternal farewell of most of those she loved. As she stepped from Queen Maria Theresa's carriage and entered one belonging to the King that was to bear

her to the frontier, every eye was wet with tears, and the common folk who witnessed the leave-taking cried aloud with grief. Only Marie Louise, with fixed face and stony eyes, was mute. But when the last farewell was said, and the Queen's carriage with the Dauphin turned to leave, one irrepressible wail of sorrow was wrung from the heart of the poor girl, as she sank back fainting upon the cushions of the carriage by her father's side.[1]

Through France, by short stages, and followed by a great household under the Duke of Harcourt and the Maréchale Clerambant, as mistress of the robes, the young Queen made her way, splendidly entertained by the cities through which she passed; for to them the marriage meant peace with Spain, and rich and poor blessed her for her beauty and her sacrifice. The Marquis of Balbeses, the Spanish ambassador and his wife, a Colonna, rode in her train, and at Poictiers the latter brought her the news of Don Juan's unregretted death. The Marchioness happened to be wearing a black silk handkerchief at her neck; and, lightly touching it, and smiling, she said: 'This is all the mourning I am going to wear for *him*.'[2] Thenceforward to the sad end Marie Louise had to deal with those who, with smiling face and soft speeches, were secretly bent upon her ruin; and she, a bright beauty full of strength and the joy of life, hungry for the love that had been denied her, was no match, even if she had cared to struggle with them, for the false hearts and subtle brains that planned the shipwreck of her life.

The household of the new Queen, which had been

[1] 'Descripcion de las circunstancias,' etc. Madrid, 1679.

[2] *Ibid.*

chosen by Don Juan before his death, started from the capital towards the frontier on the 26th September, and already intrigue was rife amongst the courtiers to gain ascendency over the young consort of the King. The master of the household, the Marquis of Astorga, was mainly famous for his gallantry, and had been a firm friend of Don Juan; whilst the mistress of the robes, the Duchess of Terranova in her own right, was a stern grand dame of sixty, whose experience, like that of Astorga, had been principally Italian, and of whom some whispered that 'she knew more about carbines and daggers than about thimbles and needles.'[1] However that may be, she was imperious and punctilious to the last degree, but kept Marie Louise in the right way as she understood it; though, as we shall see, the roughness of her methods disgusted the young Queen and hastened the inevitable catastrophe.[2] Close upon the heels of the official household went some of

[1] 'Semanario Erudito,' vol. ii., where a pamphlet of the period is reproduced accusing her of complicity in the murder of her cousin, Don Diego de Aragon.

[2] The lively Mme. D'Aulnoy gives a description of a scene previous to the departure of the young Queen's household from Madrid. The ladies had been privately mustered in the Retiro Gardens for the King to see how they would look mounted when they entered the capital in state with the Queen. 'The young ladies of the palace were quite pretty, but, good God! what figures the Duchess of Terranova and Doña Maria de Aragon cut. They were both mounted on mules, all bristling and clanking with silver, and with a great saddle cloth of black velvet, like those used by physicians on their horses in Paris. They were both dressed in widows' weeds, which I have already described to you, both very ugly and very old, with an air of severity and imperiousness, and they wore great hats tied on by strings under their chins. There were twenty gentlemen around them holding them up, for fear they should fall, though they would never have allowed one to touch them thus unless they had been in fear of breaking their necks.—'Voyage d'Espagne.' The same authority says that the Duchess of Terranova alone took with her on the journey, 'six litters of different coloured embroidered velvet, and forty mules caparisoned as richly as ever I have seen.'

Mariana's friends, especially the Duke of Osuna, appointed Grand Equerry, and an Italian priest, who aspired to the post of Queen's confessor; and even before she entered Spain began to whisper to Marie Louise political counsels intended to betray her.

Once again on the historic banks of the Bidasoa, and on the island of Pheasants that had seen so many regal meetings, sumptuous pavilions of silk brocade and tapestry were erected. Marie Louise at St. Jean de Luz, a few miles away, was sick at heart, in spite of all the splendour that surrounded her; and she could not suppress her tears as she stood upon the last foot of French soil she was ever to touch, ready to enter the gilded barge that was to cross the few feet of water that separated her from the little gaily decked neutral island where the Marquis of Astorga was to receive her on bended knee as his sovereign mistress.

The rule of the formidable old Duchess of Terranova began the moment Marie Louise stepped into the barge that was to land her on the Spanish bank. The Queen was dressed in the graceful garb that prevailed in the Court of Lous XIV. The soft yielding skirts and square cut bodice with abundance of fine lace at neck and wrists were coquettishly feminine. The bright brown hair of the bride was curled and frizzed at the sides and on the brow, in artful little ringlets, and all this grace and prettiness looked to the Spanish ladies of the old school indecorous, if not positively indecent. Their vast widehooped farthingales, of heavy brocade, their long flat bodices, their stiff unbendable sleeves, and in the case of younger ladies, their hair, lank and uncurled, falling upon their shoulders, except where it was parted at the side and gathered with a bow of ribbon over one temple, formed an entire contrast to

the French feminine fashions of the time; and until Marie Louise donned the Spanish garb, and did her hair in Spanish style, the Duchess of Terranova looked with grave disapproval at her mistress.

After the whole party had attended the Te Deum at Irun the journey south began, though not before a desperate fight for precedence had taken place between the Duke of Osuna and the Marquis of Astorga, a struggle that was renewed on every opportunity until the Duke was recalled to the King's side. Long ere this the young King's impatience to meet his bride had over-ridden all the dictates of etiquette, and he had started on his journey northward on the 23rd October, before even Marie Louise had entered Spain. To one of those witty French ladies who, at the time, wrote such excellent letters, we are indebted for invaluable information on the events of the next two years, and the letters of Mme. de Villars, wife of the French ambassador, will furnish us with many vivid pictures. Writing from Madrid the day before Marie Louise entered Spain (2nd November 1679) Mme. de Villars says: 'M. Villars had started to join the King, who is going in search of the Queen with such impetuosity that it is impossible to follow him. If she has not arrived at Burgos when he reaches there, he is determined to take the Archbishop of Burgos and go as far as Vitoria, or to the frontier, if needs be, to marry the Princess. He was deaf to all advice to the contrary, he is so completely transported with love and impatience. So with these dispositions, no doubt the young Queen will be happy. The Queen Dowager is very good and very reasonable, and passionately desires that she (Marie Louise) should be contented.'[1]

[1] 'Letters de Mme. de Villars.' Paris, 1823.

As the royal couple approached each other, almost daily messages of affection and rich gifts passed between them. First went from Marie Louise a beautiful French gold watch, with a flame-coloured ribbon, which she assured the love-lorn Charles had already encircled her neck. On the 9th November she reached Oñate, where she passed the night, and sent from there a miniature of herself on ivory set with diamonds, and with this went a curious letter,[1] now published for the first time, touching upon a subject which afterwards became one of the principal sources of Marie Louise's troubles in Spain. The letter is in Spanish, and in the Queen's own writing, a large, bold hand, full of character. The Queen told Balbeses in Paris that she had learnt Spanish in order to talk it with Queen Maria Theresa, but did not speak it much. The present letter was probably, therefore, drafted or corrected in draft before she wrote it (perhaps by Mme. de Clarembant, who spoke Spanish), as there are no serious errors of syntax in it.

'If I were ruled by the impulses of my heart alone, I should be sending off couriers to your Majesty every instant. I send to you now Sergeant Cicinetti, whom I knew at the Court of France, and his great fidelity also to your Majesty's service. I pray you receive him with the same kindness that I send him. My heart, sire, is so overflowing with gratitude that your Majesty will see it in all the acts of my life. They wished to make me believe that your Majesty disapproved of my riding on horseback, but Remille (?), who has just come from your Majesty,

[1] Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid, MSS. C., 1-5, transcribed by the present writer.

assures me that just the contrary is the case, especially as for these bad roads horses are the best. As my greatest anxiety is to please your Majesty, I will do as you wish; for my whole happiness is that your Majesty should be assured that I shall only like that which you like. God grant you many years of life, as I desire and need. Oñate, 9th November.—Your Niece and Servant, MARIE LOUISE.'

In fact, the Duchess of Terranova, from the first day, had been remonstrating with the Queen against her insisting upon riding a great horse over the wretched rain-soaked tracts that did duty for roads. Spanish ladies, she was told, travelled in closely-curtained carriages or litters, or, in case of urgent need, upon led mules, but never upon horses thus: and Marie Louise, who was a splendid horsewoman, had excusably defended the custom of the Court in which she had been reared. This was the first cause of disagreement between Marie Louise and her mistress of the robes, but others quickly followed.

Whilst Charles was impatiently awaiting his bride at Burgos, Marie Louise travelled slowly with her great train of French and Spanish courtiers over the miry roads and through the drenching winter of northern Spain. Already her daily passages of arms with the Duchess of Terranova had filled her with apprehension and anxiety. M. de Villars met her at Briviesca, and found her 'full of inquietude and mistrust, and perceived that the change of country, and people and manners, enough to embarrass a more experienced person than she, and the cabals and intrigues that assailed her on every hand, had plunged her into a condition of agitation which made her fear everything without knowing upon whom she could

depend.'[1] The ambassador did his best to tranquillise her. All these people, he said, were intriguing in their own interests. She need not trouble about them: only let her love the King and live in harmony with the Queen-Mother, whom she would find full of affection for her, and all would be well. It is clear that Don Juan's faction had not died with him, and even at this early stage the household, mainly appointed by him, had done their best to make Marie Louise fear and dread her mother-in-law.

On the 18th November, the day after her interview with Villars, the bride arrived at Quintanapalla, within a few miles of Burgos, where she was to pass the night; the ostensible intention of the Spaniards being that the marriage should take place at Burgos the next day. Everything was done to lead the official Frenchmen to believe this; but Villars and Harcourt were suspicious; and early on the morning of the 19th, they arrived from Burgos at the miserable poverty-stricken village where Marie Louise had passed the night. Assembled there they found members of the King's household, and taxed the Duchess of Terranova with the intention of carrying through the royal marriage there. She replied haughtily that the King had so commanded, and had given orders that no one was to attend the wedding, but the few Spanish officers and witnesses strictly necessary. The two noble Frenchmen indignantly announced their intention of attending the ceremony, in obedience to the orders of their own King Louis, whether the Spaniards liked it or not. The imperious old lady thereupon flew into a towering rage; '*et dit beaucoup de choses hors de propos*,' and the ambassadors, declining to quarrel with

[1] 'Mémoires de la Cour d'Espagne,' par M. de Villars.

an angry woman, sent a courier galloping to Burgos to demand leave for the official representatives of France to witness the marriage of a French princess.[1]

At eleven o'clock in the morning, the King himself arrived at the poor hamlet of ten houses, and at the door of the apartment where she had lodged his beautiful bride met him. She looked radiant, 'in a beautiful French costume covered with a surprising quantity of gems,'[2] though Charles told her the next day that he infinitely preferred her with the Spanish garb and coiffure, which she usually assumed thenceforward. On the threshold of the squalid labourer's cottage, Marie Louise made as if to kneel and kiss the King's hand; but he stepped forward and raised her. Unfortunately, thanks to his mumbling speech and her agitation, and small familiarity with spoken Spanish, they soon found that conversation was impossible without an interpreter, and Villars stepped into the breach and said the mutual words of greeting between the husband and wife.[3]

But whilst he was doing this courtly service, his keen eyes saw that the humble living chamber of the cottage, where the ceremony of marriage was to take place, was being filled by Spanish grandees, who had ranged themselves in the place of honour on the right hand. Louis had broken down the old Spanish claim

[1] 'Mémoires.' Villars.

[2] Lettres de Mme. Villars.

[3] Mme. D'Aulnoy thus describes the King's appearance at this first interview with his bride: 'I have heard that the Queen was extremely surprised at his appearance. He had a very short, wide jacket (*just au corps*) of grey barracan; his breeches were of velvet, and his stockings of very loose spun silk. He wore a very beautiful cravat which the Queen had sent him, but it was fastened rather too loosely. His hair was put behind his ears, and he wore a light grey hat.'—'Voyage d'Espagne.' La Haye, 1692.

to precedence before other nations, and Villars at once demanded for Harcourt and himself the pre-eminent place. Under protest, and with evil grace, the grandees were obliged to make way for the Frenchmen; and there, in the squalid room, at mid-day, with grey skies looming overhead, and the drizzling rain dimming the tiny windows, Charles King of Spain was married to Marie Louise of Orleans.[1]

An impromptu dinner was served immediately afterwards to the King and Queen; and at two o'clock in the afternoon they entered the big coach that awaited them, and the whole caravan floundered through the mud to the city of Burgos. The next morning early the bride left the city privately to dine at the neighbouring convent of Las Huelgas, and thence to make her state entry on horseback, and dressed in Spanish fashion. Then, for three days, the usual round of masquerades, bull-fights, and comedies, kept the Court amused, and the dreaded hour of parting from her French train came to Marie Louise. Loaded with fine presents and rewards from the King, the great ladies and gallant gentlemen who had kept up the spirits of the Queen, now perforce turned their faces towards the north again, and, as Marie Louise saw the French carriages depart, her composure gave way, and she broke into a paroxysm of tears.

Spaniards generally, and especially the King, saw the French courtiers depart with delight. For years the two countries had been constantly at war. The splendour of France had grown proportionately as poverty and impotence had fallen upon Spain. Old

[1] A note on a previous page explains the reason why these small villages were chosen for the marriage ceremonies of the Kings of Spain.

ambitions and vengeful hate were not dead, and many Spaniards still dreamed of dictating to the world if only France could be checked. At every step Marie Louise, who loved France with all her heart, and had been forced to leave it, as she was told, to serve its interests, was reminded that she must forget the dear land of her youth and think only of her husband's realm. It was too much to expect that she would do it, and it is fair to say that she did not try. She was a blithe, gay-hearted girl, in the full flower of youth and strength, not yet eighteen: the pleasures of Versailles and St Cloud had hitherto filled her life, and here in stern Spain, surrounded by sinister intrigues she did not understand, and married to this degenerate anæmic creature by her side, she did her best to play her part properly; but she was French to her inmost soul, and she would not forget her own folk and her old home. The harsh Duchess of Terranova might insist upon the bright brown curls being brushed wet till they hung flat and lank, and might cram the beautiful round bosom into the hideous flat corset demanded by Spanish fashion; but even she could not quite silence the frank, careless laugh, or suppress the triumphant coquetry of a Parisian beauty overflowing with the sensuousness of maturing passion.

During the stay at Burgos, and afterwards, the Duchess of Terranova kept urging upon the narrow, suspicious King that his new wife was a young woman of free and easy manners, entirely opposed to Spanish ideas of decorum, and that he must keep a tight rein upon her. She laid it down, moreover, that the girl must receive no visits of any sort until after her State entry into Madrid, which would mean some six weeks

of complete isolation.[1] At Torrejon de Ardoz, a few miles from Madrid, Charles and his wife were met by Mariana. The Queen-Mother was wiser and deeper than the Mistress of the Robes; and instead of frightening her daughter-in-law she was outwardly all kindness and sweetness to her. As we shall see in the course of this history, the Terranova way, harsh as it was, was less disastrous to Marie Louise than the policy of letting her go her own way, and then holding her up to reprobation.

Mme. Villars records the coming of the newly-married pair to the Buen Retiro palace, where the Queen was to remain whilst the preparations were made for her state entry some weeks later. 'Le roi et la reine viennent seuls dans un grand carosse sans glace, à la mode du pays. Il sera fort heureux pour eux qu'ils soient comme leur carosse.[2] On dit que la reine fait tres bien : pour le roi, comme il etait fort amoreux avant que de l'avoir vue, sa presence ne peut qu'avoir augmenté sa passion.'

Marie Louise had now no Frenchwomen with her but two old nurses and two maids of inferior rank; and some days after she had arrived at the Buen Retiro she begged that Madame Villars, the ambassador's wife, might be allowed to come and raise her spirits by a chat in French. The Duchess of Terranova was shocked, and refused. Neither man nor woman, she said, should see the Queen until the state entry. Marie Louise then tried her husband. Might not the ambassadress come in strict incognito? He seems to have consented, and the Queen joyously sent word

[1] 'Mémoires.' Villars.

[2] It will be seen that the sprightly letter-writer indulges here in an untranslatable pun. The carriage was without glass=glace, and she hoped the occupants would be without ice=glace.

to Mme. Villars ; but Villars was aware of the jealousy in the palace, and before allowing his wife to go, communicated with the Duchess of Terranova. She knew nothing, she said, of such a permission, nor would she inquire, and the Queen should see no one whilst she remained at the Retiro.

Secret means were found for letting Marie Louise know why her countrywoman did not respond to the invitation ; but a few days afterwards Mme. Villars went to the Retiro, doubtless by appointment, to pay her respects to the Queen-Mother Mariana. She found her everything that was kind and amiable. 'Have you seen my daughter-in-law yet ?' the Queen-Mother asked. 'She is so anxious to see you, and will receive you when you like : to-morrow if you wish.' This was a great victory over the Duchess of Terranova, for Marie Louise had seen not a soul but the inhabitants of the Retiro since she entered it. Only two days before the Marchioness of Balbases, the late ambassadress in France, who, though an Italian, was married to a Spanish grandee, had gone to the apartment of the Mistress of the Robes to beg an audience of the Queen. The latter, hearing her friend's voice, had run into the room from her own adjoining chamber; but the moment the scandalised Duchess of Terranova caught sight of her she seized her roughly by the arm and pushed her into her own apartment again. 'These manners,' says Mme. Villars in recounting the incident, 'are not so extraordinary here as they would be anywhere else.'[1]

[1] Writing of this period, Mme. D'Aulnoy, who professes to have been in Madrid at the time, says that the Marchioness de la Fuente told her that : 'the Queen had been much upset at the roughness of the Mistress of the Robes, who, seeing that her Majesty's hair did not lie flat on the forehead, spat into her hand and approached for the purpose of sticking

The French ambassadress lost no time in availing herself of the Queen-Mother's hint; and on the following day went to the Retiro. The account of her visit to the Queen may best be told in her own racy words: 'I entered by the apartment of the Mistress of the Robes, who received me with all sorts of civility. She took me through some little passages to a gallery, where I expected to see only the Queen, but, to my great surprise, I found myself before the whole royal family. The King was seated in a great arm-chair, and the two Queens on cushions. The Mistress of the Robes kept hold of my hand, telling me as we advanced how many courtesies I had to make, and that I must begin with the King. She brought me up so close to his Majesty's chair that I did not know what she wished me to do. For my part, I thought nothing more was required of me than a low courtesy; and, without vanity, I may remark that he did not return it, though he seemed not sorry to see me. When I told M. de Villars about it afterwards, he said no doubt the Mistress of the Robes expected me to kiss the King's hand. I thought so myself, but I felt no inclination to do so. . . . There I was then, in the midst of these three Majesties. The Queen-Mother, as on the previous day, said many agreeable things, and the young Queen seemed very much pleased to see me, though I did my best that she should show it in a discreet way. The King has a little Flemish dwarf who understands and speaks

the straying lock down with saliva. The Queen resented his warmly, and rubbed hard with her pocket handkerchief upon the spot where this old woman had so dirtily wetted her forehead. . . . It is really quite pitiable the way this old Mistress of the Robes treats the Queen. I know for a fact that she will not allow her to have a single hair curled, and forbids her to go near a window or speak to a soul.'—'Voyage d'Espagne.'

French very well, and he helped the conversation considerably. They brought one of the young ladies in a farthingale, that I might examine the machine.[1] The King had me asked what I thought of it, and I replied, through the dwarf, that I did not believe it was ever invented for a human form. He seemed very much of my opinion. They brought me a cushion, upon which I sat only for a moment in obedience to the sign made to me, but I took an opportunity immediately afterwards to rise, as I saw so many "ladies of honour" standing, and I did not wish to offend them; though the Queens repeatedly told me to be seated. The young Queen had a collation served by her ladies on their knees—ladies of the most splendid names, such as Aragon, Castile and Portugal. The Queen-Mother took chocolate and the King nothing. The young Queen, as you may imagine, was dressed in Spanish fashion, the dress being made of some of the lovely stuffs she brought with her from France. She was beautifully *coiffée*, her hair being brought diagonally across the brow, and the rest falling loose over her shoulders. She has an admirable complexion, very fine eyes, and a bewitching mouth when she laughs. And what a thing it is to laugh in Spain! The gallery is rather long, the walls being covered with crimson damask or velvet, studded all over very close with gold trimmings. From one end to the other the floor is laid with the most lovely carpet I ever saw in my life, and on it there are tables, cabinets and brasiers, candlesticks being upon the tables. Every now and then very grandly

[1] It was a hooped skirt of peculiar shape, fashionable in Spain, called a *guardainfante*, of which a specimen may be seen in the portrait of Mariana in the present volume.

dressed maids come in, each with two silver candlesticks, to replace others taken out for snuffing. These maids make very great, long courtesies, with much grace. A good way from the Queens there were some maids of honour sitting on the floor, and many ladies of advanced age, in the usual widow's garb, were leaning standing against the wall.

'The King and Queen left in three quarters of an hour, the King walking first. The young Queen took her mother-in-law by the hand leading her to the door of the gallery, and then she turned back quickly, and came to rejoin me. The Mistress of the Robes did not return, and it was evident that they had given the Queen full liberty to entertain me. There was only one old lady in the gallery, a long way off, and the Queen said that if she was not there she would give me a good hug. It was four o'clock when I arrived, and half-past seven before I left, and then it was I who made the first move. I can assure you I wish the King, the Queen-Mother and the Mistress of the Robes could have heard all I said to the Queen. I wish you could have heard it too, and have seen us walking up and down that gallery, which the lights made very agreeable. This young Queen, in the novelty and beauty of her garments, and with an infinitude of diamonds, was simply ravishing. Once for all do not forget that black and white are not more dissimilar than France and Spain. I think our young Princess is doing very well. She wished to see me every day, but I implored her to excuse me, unless I saw clearly that the King and the Queen-Mother wished it as much as she did. . . . The Mistress of the Robes came to meet me as I left the gallery, and I found there the Queen's French attendants, to whom I said that they must learn

Spanish, and avoid, if possible, saying a word of French to the Queen. I know that they are scolded for speaking it too much to her.' [1]

In the deadly *ennui* of such a life as that described above Marie Louise, though she did her best to be patient, begged earnestly that her countrywoman should be allowed to see her often. But Mme. Villars pointed out to her how much depended upon her prudence, and avoided the palace whenever possible, in the hope that the young Queen would fall into Spanish ways. The King also, in his half-witted way, tried to please his lovely wife: 'more beautiful and agreeable,' says Mme. Villars, 'than any lady of her Court,' giving her many exquisite presents of jewellery, and running in and out of her apartments to tell her bits of news, and so on. But the life was deadly dull; and the gloom within the palace could, as Mme. Villars says, be seen, tasted and touched. Charles had no amusements other than the most childish games and trivial pastimes: his intellect was not capable of sustaining a reasonable conversation, and after a day of stiff monotony, he and his wife went to bed every night at half-past eight, the moment they had finished supper: 'with the last morsel still in their mouths,' as Mme. Villars writes.

There was some eager talk of the Queen's pregnancy before the grand State entry into Madrid; but when that hope disappeared, and Marie Louise began to languish alarmingly in the dull incarceration of the Retiro, she and her husband sufficiently relaxed their surroundings to go to the hunting palace of the Pardo, six miles away, where the young Queen could ride her French horses, and Charles could enjoy himself with a

[1] 'Lettre de Mme. Villars à Mme. Coulange,' 15th December 1679.

little pigsticking. At length the great day for the public entry into the capital came on the 13th January 1680. Madrid, as usual, had squandered money sorely needed for bread in gaudy shows. At every street corner arose monuments and arches of imitation marble; and all the heathen mythology was ransacked for far-fetched compliments to the people's new idol. The King and his mother leaving the Retiro in the morning took up a position in the central balcony of the Oñate palace, still standing, in the Calle Mayor; and at noon Marie Louise on a beautiful chestnut palfrey issued from the gates of the Buen Retiro, where the aldermen of the town stood awaiting her with the canopy of state, under which she was to ride to the palace.

Preceded by trumpeters and the knights of the royal orders, by her household and by the grandees of Spain, all in garments of dazzling magnificence, rode the most beautiful woman in Spain, gorgeously dressed in garments so richly embroidered with gold that their colour was hidden, and covered with precious stones, but withal, as a Spanish eyewitness observes, 'more beautifully adorned by her loveliness and grace than by the rich habit that she wore.' Her horse was led by the Marquis of Villamayna, her chief equerry; and after her came a great train of ladies led by the Duchess of Terranova, all mounted on draped led mules. As the new Queen passed the Oñate palace she smiled and bowed low to the King and his mother, who could be dimly seen behind the nearly closed jalousies; and went triumphantly forward, conquering all hearts by the power of her radiant beauty.[1] But though she,

[1] 'Nouvelle relation de la magnifique et royale entrée . . . à Madrid par Marie Louise,' etc. Paris, 1680.

poor soul, knew it not, more was needed than careless beauty to win the battle in which she was engaged, a battle not of hearts but of subtle crafty brains.

Bullfights, with grandees as toreros, masquerades, cane-tourneys, and the inevitable religious pageantry, at all of which Marie Louise, glittering with gems, took her place, ran their usual course; and at the end of a week after the entry the Queen began her regular married life in the old Alcazar on the cliff, more gloomy and monotonous, even, than the Retiro, in its gardens on the other side of the capital.

The political intrigues, though they had never ceased, had been naturally somewhat abated during the Queen's voyage and subsequent seclusion: but as soon as the marriage feasts were over the struggle began in earnest. Charles, absorbed in his courtship and marriage, had appointed no minister to succeed Don Juan, the necessary administrative duties being performed by a favourite of his, Don Jeronimo de Eguia, a man of no position or ability; and the first bone of contention was the appointment of the man who was really to rule Spain. The old party of the Queen-Mother inclined to a Board of Government, headed by the Constable of Castile; but Mariana, in appearance, at least, held herself aloof, and the minister ultimately chosen by the King was the first noble in Spain, the Duke of Medina Celi, an easy going, idle, amiable magnate, who had sided with Don Juan; but whose gentle manners had convinced the King that he would not tyrannise over him as Don Juan had done. The Duchess of Terranova and most of the household whispered constantly to the young Queen distrust and suspicion of Mariana; and after her state entry they encouraged her as much as possible to see the French

ambassadress constantly. The Queen-Mother, they said, had been continually with the German ambassador and his wife talking German, why should not Marie Louise do the same with the French ambassador. But both Villars and his wife were wary, and saw that they were to be used to form a French party at Court to oppose the Queen-Mother and the Austrians, and this they were not at present inclined to do.

Villars himself constantly reiterates that the Queen-Mother was quite sincere in her professions of affection for her daughter-in-law, and he and his wife lost no opportunity of urging Marie Louise to respond cordially to her mother-in-law's loving advances. The diplomatist attributes to Mariana, indeed, at this time, sentiments which her whole history seems to falsify, and it appears far more probable that Marie Louise was right than the ambassador when she looked askance at the tenderness of her husband's mother. The old Queen, says Villars, was discontented with the way her Austrian kinsmen had treated her, and leaned now to the side of France, which had been friendly with her in her exile; she sincerely loved her daughter-in-law and hoped that her son would have children to succeed him by his beautiful wife. Villars, indeed, casts the whole of the blame upon Marie Louise, who, he says—probably quite truly—was lacking in judgment, decision and generosity, and hesitated too late between the Duchess of Terranova, who constantly warned her against the Queen-Mother, and the French ambassador and others who strove to persuade her to make common cause with her mother-in-law, and rule all things jointly with her.[1]

The nearest approach to common action of the two

[1] 'Mémoires de la Cour d'Espagne.' Villars.

Queens was when they both persuaded Charles to appoint the weak, idle, Medina Celi as minister; but, in this, and in all the other manifestations of Mariana's conciliatory amiability at the time and after, it is unquestionable that the measures and men she smiled upon were such as would, and did, inevitably lead to a state of things in which her firm hand would become indispensable. The effects of the utter ineptitude of such a government as that of Charles and Medina Celi were soon seen. The coin had been tampered with to such an extent as to have no fixed value, provisions were at famine price, and the attempt to fix low values of commodities by decree aroused a sanguinary revolt in Madrid in the early spring of 1680, that nearly overthrew the wretched government such as it was. Bandits infested the high roads, half the work of the country was done by foreigners, whilst Spaniards starved in idleness, or lived by preying upon the comparatively few who still had means.

In this abject state of affairs, the King gave but a quarter of an hour daily to his public duties, which were limited to stamping his signature on decrees placed before him, for he had neither the industry to read them nor the intellect to understand them; and the rest of his time was spent on the most puerile frivolity and in endless visits with Marie Louise to convents and churches. 'Such visits,' says Mme. Villars, 'are anything but a feast for her. She insisted upon my going with her the last two days. As I knew nobody, I was very much bored, and I believe she only asked me to go in order to keep her in countenance. The King and Queen are seated in two arm chairs, the nuns sitting at their feet, and

many ladies come to kiss their hands. The collation is brought, the Queen's repast always being a roast capon, which she eats whilst the King gazes at her, and thinks that she eats too much. There are two dwarfs who do all the talking.'

A very few weeks of this idle life and good living worked its effect upon Marie Louise. In February 1680, Mme. Villars writes: 'She has grown so fat, that if it goes much further, her face will be round. Her bosom, strictly speaking, is already too full; although it is one of the most beautiful I have ever seen. She usually sleeps ten or twelve hours, and eats meat four times a day. It is true that her breakfast and her luncheon (collation) are her best meals. She always has served for lunch a capon boiled and broth, and a roast capon. She laughs very much when I have the honour to be with her. I am quite sure that it is not I who am sufficiently agreeable to put her into such a good humour, and that she must be pretty comfortable generally. No one could behave better than she does, or be sweeter and more complaisant with the King. She saw his portrait before she married him, but they did not paint his strange humour, nor his love of solitude. The customs of the country have not all been turned upside down to make them more agreeable for her, but the Queen-Mother does everything she can to soften them. All sensible people think that the young Queen could not do better than contribute on her side to the tenderness and affection that the Queen-Mother shows for her. . . . When I tell you that she is fat, that she sleeps well and laughs heartily, I tell you no more than the truth; but it is no less true that the life she leads does not please her. . . . But, after all, she

is doing wonderfully, and I am quite astonished at it.'[1]

Already we see by this, that before Marie Louise had been in Madrid three months, she was going her own way, and was being humoured to the top of her bent by Mariana. She had been sold into a slavery of utter boredom, married to a degenerate imbecile; and she had neither brains, heart, nor ambition to take a leading part in politics, or to play the rôle that she was intended to fill in Spain by her uncle King Louis. All that was left for her, then, was to eat, drink, sleep, and be as merry as her grim surroundings would allow; and let the world wag as it would. The society of the capital and Court had reached the lowest degree of decadence; and a strong, high-minded Queen would have found ample work in reducing at least her own household to decency. Every lady in the palace and elsewhere had a gallant, and was proud of it; and it was a universal practice in theatres and public places, or even at windows looking upon the street, for lovers to converse openly in the language of signs. Immorality and vice had reached such a terrible pitch that mere children who could afford it lived in concubinage, and few people, high or low, were free from preventible disease.[2]

Marie Louise, utterly frivolous, made no attempt to reform all this, but swam with the stream, taking part in the King's puerile pleasures of throwing eggshells full of scent at people, or playing with him for hours at his favourite game of spilikens for pence. Mariana looked on at it all quite complacently, Villars and his wife thought out of mere amiability. That may have

[1] Lettres de Mme. Villars à Mme. Coulange.

[2] 'Voyage d'Espagne,' Mme. D'Aulnoy. For the amount of credit to be given to Mme. D'Aulnoy, see note on a previous page.

been so, but it is clear to see now that all that was necessary was to let Marie Louise go her own way unchecked, and Mariana had nothing to fear from her politically or personally. As an instance of the attitude of the Queen-Mother towards the young Queen's thoughtlessness, a little circumstance related by Mme. Villars may be quoted: 'I was walking in the gallery of the Buen Retiro on Sunday, before seeing the comedy, thinking nothing of kings or queens, when I heard our young Princess call out my name very loudly. I entered the room whence the voice proceeded quite unceremoniously; and, to my confusion, I found the Queen seated between the King and the Queen-Mother. She had thought of nothing when she called me but her own wish to see me, quite regardless of Spanish gravity; and she burst out laughing heartily when she saw me. The Queen-Mother reassured me. She is always pleased when her daughter-in-law enjoys herself. Indeed, she made an opportunity for me to come and talk with her in a window recess, but I retired as soon as I could.' To encourage Marie Louise to forget for a moment that she was a Spanish Queen, was to ensure her downfall.

Here is another picture of the young Queen a few days afterwards. Mme. de Sévigné had written a letter talking of Marie Louise's beautiful little feet, with which she danced so nimbly at Versailles. The young Queen was gratified at the flattery, but ruefully said that all her pretty feet were used for now was to walk round her chamber a few times, and carry her off to bed at half-past eight every night. On this occasion Mme. Villars thus describes her: 'She was as beautiful as an angel, weighed down but uncomplaining, by a *parure* of emeralds and diamonds on her head, that is

to say, a thousand sparks; a *furious* pair of earrings, and in front, and around her, in the form of a scarf, rings, bracelets, etc. You think, no doubt, that emeralds on her brown hair would not look well, but you are mistaken. Her complexion is one of the loveliest brunettes ever seen, her throat white, and exquisitely beautiful.'

Soon the young Queen's careless jollity received a blow, which embittered her. Charles hated and distrusted all French people; and the insistence of Marie Louise in making companions of her French maids annoyed him exceedingly; and the lives of the two maids whom she liked best were made intolerable to them to such an extent that they had to leave. The Queen was in despair, but protested and wept in vain: the two Frenchwomen were made to understand that they had to go; and when their mistress summoned them one morning she was told that they had departed from the palace for good, leaving her with only two French servants, a nurse and a maid. As usual in her trouble, she summoned Mme. Villars, who found her lying down. 'She rose at once. It is truly surprising how beautiful she has grown. She wore her hair tied up in great curls on her forehead, with rose-coloured ribbons on her cap and on the top of her head; and she was not plastered over with rouge, as she is generally obliged to be. Her throat and bosom admirable. She slipped on a French dressing-gown, which she wore for the rest of the day. She stood thus for a short time regarding herself in a great mirror, and the view seemed to revive her. Her eyes looked as if she had been weeping much. As soon as she began to speak to me the King entered the room, and it is the rule in such cases for the ladies all

to leave, except the Mistress of the Robes and some servants. I heard cards asked for, and I concluded that the Queen was going to be bored to death with the little game that the King is so fond of, at which, if you have very bad luck, you may lose a dollar. The Queen always plays it as if she was enraptured with the occupation.'

The loss of two of her French attendants drew Marie Louise ever closer to Mme. Villars, who was a person of mature age, but, to her later regret, she gradually lost some of the reserve that at first she had considered prudent in her communications with the Queen. Mariana smiled upon the constant companionship of her daughter-in-law with the French ambassadress, but she must have known, for she was experienced and clever, that it would end in disaster to Marie Louise, whose future depended upon pleasing her husband and becoming purely Spanish. The Queen did her best to keep the affection of Charles, who, in his own way, was desperately in love with her, and on occasions when he had to leave her for a day or two she affected desperate sorrow at his absence so cleverly as to arouse the admiration of Mme. Villars for her good acting.

But, though she kept the King in alternate fits of maudlin devotion and despairing rage at her capricious flouting of all the rules and traditions of his Court, he himself was politically a cypher, and the policy always favoured by Mariana slowly but surely gained ground, whilst the French interest grew weaker; and Marie Louise, in spite of her uncle's indignant reminders, raised no finger to help the cause she had been sent to Spain to champion. If Mariana ever had quarrelled with the Emperor, as Villars thought,

the breach was patched up now, and the Austrian ambassador, Count de Grana, an old friend of Mariana's, came to draw closer than before the family alliance. And yet Mariana ostentatiously abstained from any governmental action, whilst all went in the way she wished.

The first open sign of a return to the old policy of religious unity and the Austrian connection was the holding of the greatest *auto de fe* that had taken place in Madrid for half a century, in June 1580. The Plaza Mayor was transformed at a vast expense into a great theatre; all its hundreds of windows were filled with the aristocracy of Spain, and the high roofs of the houses crowded with people to see the dreadful show. All the inquisitors in Spain had been summoned, and the pulpit, the great tribune for the judges, the platform for the bishops, and the fronts of the barriers and balconies were covered with costly tapestries and rich hangings for the occasion. Eighty-five grandees and noblemen were proud to act as familiars of the Holy Office, and a picked corps of 250 gentlemen served as soldiers of the faith, to guard its ministers, and each to carry a faggot for the devilish bonfire at the gate of Fuencarral after the *auto* was finished.

All day long, from early morning till four in the afternoon, the King, with Marie Louise and Mariana, sat in the principal balcony of the Panaderia, the centre house in the great square, whilst 120 poor wretches in sambenitos, with ropes round their necks, gags in their mouths, and other insignia of shame, were condemned after innumerable ceremonies, sermons and rogations, to the tender mercies of the law condemning heresy. Charles swore again on the

gospels to defend and promote the Catholic faith as held in Spain; and when the dread sentences were pronounced, the captain of the Inquisition Guard entered the royal balcony, bearing upon his shield a faggot, which was presented to Charles and the Queen, the former of whom returned it to the holder, saying: 'Take it in my name, and let it be the first cast upon the fire to burn heretics.' The French ambassador and his wife were obliged to be present, for those who did not attend were looked upon with suspicion; but they, and all the world, knew that this atrocious scene meant the growing power of the traditional ideas connected with Austrian friendship and the certainty at no distant period of a renewal of the war with France.

Paltry questions of diplomatic precedence and privilege, the haughty encroaching spirit of Louis XIV., and the utter abandonment of even current affairs by the Spanish government, under lazy Medina Celi, widened daily the breach between France and Spain. Villars and his wife, according to the evidence now before us, appear to have misunderstood entirely who were their real friends and foes in the palace. Mariana was all amiability to them, constantly urging that the ambassadress should be much with Marie Louise, and openly disapproving of the harsh manners of the Duchess of Terranova, who was always, says Villars, abusing the French and turning the King's dislike to his wife's countrymen into unreasoning hatred. The ambassador therefore believed that the Duchess was really the enemy of the young Queen and the French interest; but it is unquestionable that in the then state of feeling in Spain, the only hope for Marie Louise was to keep as far away from her own country-

men and women as her Mistress of the Robes desired. Marie Louise, thoughtless as she was, naturally considered this tyrannical and hard. On one occasion a French half-witted beggar came to her carriage door, and the Queen, speaking French to him, threw him some alms; whereupon the King was so enraged that he insisted upon the beggar being arrested, examined and expelled the country. Another day the King and Queen in their coach passed in the street some Dutch gentlemen dressed in French style, whose carriage, according to etiquette, had drawn up whilst the royal equipage passed. The strangers were on the left side of the street, and consequently were nearer the Queen than the King, and in their salutations addressed their respects to her. Again the King made a violent jealous scene, and caused a grave reprimand to be addressed to the Dutchmen, who were forbidden ever to salute the Queen again.

In the spring of 1680, on a disputed question of etiquette, the King took away some of the diplomatic privileges of the French ambassador, and the Duke of Orleans wrote to his daughter the Queen, asking her to speak to her husband about it. When Marie Louise did so, Charles sulkily told her to mind her own business, and not to speak to him on such affairs. She pressed her point, however, and he replied: 'They will recall this ambassador, and send me another gabacho instead.'[1] Some months later, whilst Mme. Villars was on one of her frequent visits to the Queen, the King, who had taken a special dislike to her, and often listened behind the arras to the conversation in the hope of detecting an indiscretion, broke out from his hiding-place in insulting abuse of the ambassadress.

[1] *Gabacho* is an opprobrious term applied to Frenchmen in Spain.

Villars lays all this trouble at the door of the Duchess of Terranova and the Marquis of Astorga, the Queen's master of the household, both appointed by Don Juan, and praises Mariana to the skies for her gentleness to Marie Louise, and her desire that she should have her own way and see as many French people as she liked.[1]

After a time the Duchess of Terranova, finding that the harshness of her methods, contrasting with the gentleness of her oppents, was destroying her influence, softened her manners to some extent, and went so far as to rebuke the King—even to scold him—when he said unkind things to his wife about her countrywomen, but her desire to mould Marie Louise into the traditional Spanish Queen never ceased, and if her advice had been followed, unpalatable and cross-grained as it was, the unhappy girl would have been saved much of her misery. Every small device that the King could adopt, Villars says on the advice of the Duchess, was brought into play to separate the Queen from French influence. She was kept so short of money that most of her beloved horses, which she was not allowed to ride, and their French grooms, had to be sent back to France, all her French men servants, even her doctor, were dismissed, though he, from his name (Dr. Talbot), would seem to have been an Englishman.

In this wretched existence Marie Louise grew callous. She took no pains even to be civil to the Spanish grand dames who visited her, or to pretend to care a jot for the eternal comedies and visits to convents that were the only amusements allowed her. She played for hours every day at spilikins with the King; 'the worst company in the world, and he never had any one with him but his two dwarfs.' She was

[1] 'Mémoires de la Cour d'Espagne.' Villars.

careless and buxom, and found some little pleasure in attending to her birds,[1] but nothing else; for she had neither brains, nor ambition, nor ideas, worthy of her rank. Secretly all she longed for was to return to France as a widowed Queen, to enjoy herself as she liked without fear.[2] Her one delight was the visit of Mme. Villars, who sang French airs with her, or played whilst the Queen danced a minuet, or chatted about Fontainebleau and St. Cloud. 'I do not know,' says Mme. Villars, 'what passes in her breast and in her head to keep her up so, but, as for her heart, I believe that nothing passes there at all.' In these words the witty Frenchwoman aptly sums up the character of the Queen, doomed to this life of gloomy dulness by the side of a semi-imbecile. She had left her heart behind her in the land she loved, and her existence now was carelessly epicurean.

The political intrigues went on around her unheeded, and she had not wit enough to see the traps laid for her. The Duchess of Terranova was always dour and disagreeable, but her desperate attempts to alienate the Queen from all memory of France had now made her specially disliked by her mistress, whilst Mariana and her friends ostentatiously sided with the young Queen, and deprecated the severity of the Duchess. Incited

[1] Mme. D'Aulnoy in her own Mémoires tells a curious though doubtful story of these perroquets of which Marie Louise was so fond. They had been brought from Paris, and the few sentences they had been taught were in French, so that the Duchess of Terranova thought herself justified in having them killed. When the Queen asked for them and learnt their fate she said nothing: but when next the Mistress of the Robes came to kiss her hand Marie Louise gave her two good sound slaps on the face instead. When the indignant Duchess with all her followers went in a rage to demand redress of the King, Marie Louise excused herself by saying that she gave the slaps overcome by the irresistible influence of a pregnant woman. This flattered the King and she was absolved.

[2] 'Mémoires de la Cour d'Espagne.' Villars.

by them Marie Louise determined to get rid if she could of the rough old lady who was really her only friend, and spoke first to her confidante Mme. Villars about it. The ambassador and his wife were as deeply resentful of the old Duchess, who hated French people, as was the Queen, and were delighted to hear the project for getting rid of her, but Mme. Villars counselled prudence; for she knew how flighty and unstable the Queen was. The Duchess, she said, was very clever, and such a change as that suggested was without precedent in Spain: besides, the Duchess had been later somewhat more civil than before; nevertheless, if the Queen really wished for a new mistress of the Robes she must begin by mentioning the matter to the King, and the Prime Minister, so that the affair might be settled before a word of it reached the ears of the Duchess.

Marie Louise used all her witchery that same night when she broached the subject to her husband. He answered her, as she said, more sensibly than she had expected, and told her that, if really the Duchess made her so unhappy, they would make a change; but it was a serious matter, and she must recollect that no second change would be possible. Marie Louise then approached Queen Mariana, and found her apparently cool and indifferent about it, to an extent that somewhat discouraged the young Queen, who little understood that there was nothing that her mother-in-law desired more than the removal of the only salutary check upon her conduct. But Medina Celi, the Prime Minister, whom the imperious ways of the old Duchess had offended, lent eager ear to the suggestion when, by the aid of the Villars, it was opened to him. Marie Louise, by the advice of Madame Villars, asked that the Duchess of Medina Celi might be her new Mistress of

the Robes, but that lady declined absolutely. Then the Marchioness of los Velez and other great ladies were suggested; and when Marie Louise consulted Mariana upon each one in turn, the old Queen remained cold and aloof, and even had excuses, and good words to say about the Duchess of Terranova.

But when there was a talk of the Duchess of Albuquerque, then Mariana took an interest in the matter at once, and agreed with Medina Celi that she would be an ideal person for Mistress of the Robes. But, of all the ladies at Court, the Duchess of Albuquerque was the one that Marie Louise disliked most. She might struggle as she liked, however, she soon found that without Mariana's goodwill no one could gain a footing in the palace, and she was almost tempted to beg the Duchess of Terranova to stay by her side, especially as the King himself was opposed to the Duchess of Albuquerque. It ended, of course, in Mariana having her way. She bullied her son into making the appointment, and into dismissing the people who, she said, had ruled him for a year, the Duchess of Terranova and his friend Eguia. Unbending to the last, the old Duchess, when she took leave of the Queen, noticed that the latter was crying now that the parting had come, and she told her that it was not proper for a Queen of Spain to weep for so small a matter. Marie Louise, half regretting the change now that it was too late, asked the Duchess of Terranova to come and see her sometimes. 'I will never set foot in the palace again, as long as I live,' replied the proud lady, violently banging the table and tearing her fan to bits; and she went forth in high dudgeon, refusing all the honours and rewards offered to her.

With her departure the outlook for Marie Louise changed like a charm. The new Mistress of the Robes had always been considered as austere as her predecessor, for which reason the young Queen had feared her. But she came to her new office all sweetness. The Queen was allowed to sit up until half-past ten at night, an unheard of thing before; she might mount her saddle horses and ride whenever she pleased, as no previous Queen Consort had ever done, and the King, on the persuasion of his mother and the new Duchess of the Robes, positively urged his wife to divert herself in pastimes that had previously been rigorously forbidden.[1] The change in the King was extraordinary, and proves the complete domination of his mother over his weak spirit when she pleased to exert her power. Mme. Villars happened to visit the Queen two days after the Duchess of Albuquerque assumed office; and as she entered the Queen's apartment Marie Louise ran smiling up to her in joy, crying: 'You *will* say yes to what I am going to ask you, will you not?' The demand turned out to be that, by the King's special wish, Mme. Villars's daughter should enter the Queen's household as a maid of honour; and Marie Louise, at the idea of having a French girl of her own age always near her, was transported with delight. The appointment was sanctioned and gazetted, but never took effect, for Villars could not afford to endow his daughter sufficiently well, and relations

[1] 'Mémoires de la Cour d'Espagne.' Villars. Even so, she was not allowed to mount her horses from the ground, but had to be driven in her coach to the place and mount the horse from the step of the carriage. One of her horses being very high spirited resented on one occasion this strange performance, and the Queen was thrown to the ground, much to her husband's alarm. No one, it appears, dared to touch the Queen, even to raise her from the ground, until Charles had sufficiently recovered from the shock to do so himself. (Mme. D'Aulnoy.)

soon grew bitter again; but that Charles, who hated the French, and especially Mme. Villars, should ever have consented to it proves how complete the sudden change of scene was.

Encouraged by her new liberty, Marie Louise began to take a keener interest in public affairs, always playing, as can now be clearly seen, the game of those who were bent upon her ruin. Medina Celi had been cleverly diverted by Mariana, who had been ostensibly friendly with him, whilst the councils and secretariats had been gradually packed with her friends; and Marie Louise, prompted by her, took the opportunity of the opposition offered by the minister to the stay of the Court at Aranjuez, to set her husband against Medina Celi, after which, both she and her mother-in-law, into whose hands she played, both worked incessantly to undermine the minister who was already unpopular, owing to the terrible distress in the country and his own ineptitude. The minister and his henchman Eguia, and the King's confessor, retaliated effectively by sowing jealous distrust between Mariana and her daughter-in-law, and between the King and his wife and mother; and thenceforward complete disunion existed between them all. Mariana, in disgust at her son's weakness, and knowing that events were tending her way, stood aloof for a time; Marie Louise went her own gait, making no friends and possessing no party; and the inept Charles, alternately petulant and sulky, distrusted everybody.

Villars writes of Marie Louise at this juncture: 'She, with her youth and beauty, full of life and vivacity, was not of an age or character disposed to enter into the views and application necessary for her

proper conduct. Her bent for liberty and pleasure, the memories of France and all she had left behind her there, had made Spain intolerable to her. The captivity of the palace, the ennui of idleness without amusement, the coarse low manners of the King, the unpleasantness of his person, his sulky humour, which she increased frequently by her lack of amiability towards him, all nourished her aversion and unhappiness. She took interest in nothing, and would take no measure, either for the present or the future; and so, putting aside all that Spain could give her, she only consoled herself with the idea of returning to France. She entertained this idea, encouraged by predictions and chimeras which formed her only amusement, for everything else bored her.'[1]

In her despairing knowledge that she could never hope for happiness in Spain, Marie Louise thus grew reckless. She had no ambition to rule except in the heart of the man she loved; she was not clever enough to succeed in the subtle political intrigues that went on around her; she knew now that motherhood was hardly to be hoped for with such a husband as hers, and her one thought was of the joy of living in France. As the political relations between France and Spain grew constantly more strained and Charles's detestation of Frenchmen increased, the visits of Mme. Villars to Marie Louise perforce grew rarer, for the suspicious King had got into his head that the French ambassadress was serving as an intermediary in the palace intrigues which were setting everybody by the ears. Marie Louise made matters worse by turning to her widowed nurse Mme. Quantin, and her inferior French maid. Quantin was a greedy, meddlesome

[1] 'Memoires.' Villars.

woman, of low rank, who put up her influence over the Queen for sale, and soon embroiled matters beyond repair.

The Queen, under the influence of this woman, lost what little discretion and prudence she possessed. The many poor French people in the town, to whom Quantin and the other French maids were known, would congregate beneath their apartments in the palace to gossip of France, tell the news, and perhaps to beg for favours; and Marie Louise would sometimes be imprudent enough to approach the windows and exchange words with her countrymen below. Spaniards who saw it—for jealous eyes watched the Queen always—cried shame upon such a derogation from the dignity of Spanish royalty, and the scandal-mongers of the capital already began to whisper that the 'Frenchwoman,' who would not play the part properly, and gave no signs of motherhood, might be put aside in favour of another Queen. In the Calle Mayor, a punning verse passed from hand to hand reproaching her for her sterility, and demanding in ribald rhyme that she should either give an heir to Spain, or return whence she came; and thus, as war loomed ever nearer between her two countries, the lot of the unhappy Queen grew darker.

Villars began to see that he had been misled in condemning the hard rule of the Duchess of Terranova, and aiding the Queen to gain the freedom advocated for her by the amiable Mariana. 'It was a great misfortune for the Queen,' he wrote, 'who now abandoned herself without restraint to a dangerous line of conduct, and it is quite a question, judging by results, whether the hard severity of the Duchess of Terranova was not better for her than the weak com-

plaisance of the Duchess of Albuquerque.'[1] The poor misguided girl had not a single friend. Mariana kept away; for things were going admirably from her point of view; and a new alliance between Spain and the empire and other powers, against the threatened encroachments of France, was already being discussed in secret.

The Minister, Medina Celi, had succeeded, by means of Eguia and the King's confessor, in re-establishing his position by arousing the jealousy of all the three members of the royal family against each other; and he sought further to isolate and discredit Marie Louise by whispering to the King that her friend Mme. Villars was engaged in political intrigue with the Queen to the detriment of Spain. Mme. Villars had been specially authorised to visit the Queen as much as possible, and report fully all she heard for the information of the French government; but it is certain that she had no political mission. Charles, however, was childishly jealous of her because his wife liked her, and he instructed the Marquis de la Fuente, his ambassador in France, to demand the recall of Villars in consequence of his wife's indiscretion. Louis XIV. knew his kinsman well, and the real reason for his demand: but it was part of his policy just then to reassure the Spanish King, and Villars was sacrificed. In the ambassador's letter of recall, Louis writes, after saying that Charles had complained of the intrigues of Mme. Villars: 'It is useless to inform you of all the details . . . it will suffice to say that, for many reasons affecting my service, I have not thought fit to refuse the King of Spain this mark of my complaisance, however satisfied I may be of the services you have rendered in the post you occupy.'

[1] 'Mémoires de la Cour d'Espagne.' Villars.

Both Villars and his wife disdained to justify themselves by a single word, and the ambassadress left Madrid in the summer of 1681, to the despair of Marie Louise; whilst Villars himself was replaced by another ambassador early in 1682. By this time the empire was at war with France. Louis had captured Strasbourg, and Casale in Savoy on the same day (30th September 1681), and Germany seemed almost at the mercy of the now dominant power in Europe. The imperial ambassador at Madrid, supported strongly by Mariana, was striving his utmost to draw Spain into the great war that seemed inevitable, and Holland and England, jealous of the aggression of France, were for a time apparently willing to join Spain. But the clever diplomacy of Louis diverted the powers from the alliance, except the empire and bankrupt Spain; and the sorely reduced Flemish dominion of Spain was again invaded by French troops. Luxembourg, which belonged to Spain, was besieged, the cities of Dixmunde and Courtrai were captured (November 1683), and with every fresh victory of the French, Louis became more exacting. Finally, when the unfortunate country could resist no longer, the government of Charles was forced to accept the humiliating terms of the Treaty of Ratisbon in June 1684, by which Luxembourg, the well-nigh impregnable fortress, was lost to Spain for ever, whilst Louis also kept Strasbourg, Bovines, Chimay, and Beaumont. Other smaller potentates, like the Elector of Bradenburg and the Regent of Portugal, following the example of the great Louis, hectored Spain into degrading concessions, whilst pestilence swept through the south, floods ruined Spanish Flanders, hurricanes sank the silver fleets, upon which the government

of Charles largely depended, corruption lorded over all in stark desolate Spain; and the cretin King, growing more feeble in mind and body, mumbled his prayers, or played childish games with his wife or his dwarfs.

During the war, which further despoiled the land of her adoption, the lot of Marie Louise was truly pitiable. Even before it broke out, and during the period of acrimonious recriminatory claims which followed the recall of Villars, her isolation and impotence and the growing power of Mariana were plainly evident. In the instructions given by Louis XIV. to his new ambassador, Vanguyon,[1] in 1682, the latter is instructed to visit the Queen-Mother first, with all sorts of amiable messages, and Marie Louise is only to be addressed 'in general terms,' and asked to do her best to maintain good relations between the two countries. Mariana, indeed, with the imperial ambassador, Mansfeldt, constantly at her side, had by the mere force of circumstances and her own character gradually again become the principal controlling power of the State, and, as usual, she directed her influence not to the benefit of Spain but to the aid of the empire in its secular struggle against the encroachments of France. When the war, as already mentioned, broke out (1683) with France, the underhand intrigues of Mariana and the Austrian faction to discredit Marie Louise and destroy any political influence she might have over her husband, were powerfully aided by the general feeling against everything French; and the young Queen, without a single friend near her, was more sorely beset than ever by her relentless enemies, whilst she, perplexed with intrigues that she did not

[1] 'Recueil des Instructions aux ambassadeurs de France.' Paris, 1894.

understand, surrounded by people who would willingly have followed her if she had had wit enough to lead them, threw away her chance by the frivolity and imprudence of her behaviour.[1]

She managed, it is true, by her charm and beauty to keep her husband deeply in love with her in his maudlin fashion, but, weak as he was, she failed to influence him politically.[2] She had already offended

[1] In January 1685 the Duke of Montalto in Madrid wrote to Pedro Ronquillo, the ambassador in London. 'The King attends to nothing but his hunting pastimes, and the Queen in tiring horses, as if she were a skilled horse-breaker. That is a pretty way to become pregnant! In short, my dear sir, it is quite clear that God determines to punish us on every side.' Writing again, a month later (28th February), the same correspondent, after villifying the Medina Celi government, says: 'Neither the things in the palace or anywhere else here improve. It looks, on the contrary, as if the devil himself had taken them in hand. Medina Celi is very placid over it, and cares only for himself; the King has been wolf-hunting for a week thirty miles off, and there would be no harm in that if he would only despatch business. As for the Queen, Medina Celi positively encourages her in her pranks so as to be able to hold on to office by her. He does not care so long as others have to pay.' Both the correspondents, it is needless to say, belonged to Mariana's party. 'Doc. Ined.,' lxxix.

[2] There was a document found in Marie Louise's cabinet after her death, which purported to be a political guide, written to her at this period by Louis XIV. In this cynical document the Queen is advised how to gain advantage from the King's weakness and ineptitude, and how to obtain control of him. She is to maintain an attitude between complaint and friendship with the Queen-Mother, but to be very wary with regard to her: she is advised to maintain Oropesa in the ministry, but not to trust him, or to allow him more power than he had. She is to continue to introduce French fashions, manners, etc., in the palace; and advice is given her as to how she should treat all the principal nobles. The manuscript concludes: 'Withdraw this paper into your most secret keeping. Live for yourself and for your beloved France. In Spain they do not love you, as you know, and they do not fear you either, for faint hearts easily conceive suspicions, and strength is not needed to commit a cruelty.' The original document is in the Bibliotéca Nacional, Madrid (H. 11), and there is a Spanish translation of it in MSS. Add. 15,193, British Museum. The document has usually been assumed to be authentic, but I am rather inclined to regard it as one of the many means employed to blacken the French cause after Marie Louise's death.

Medina Celi and played the game of the Queen-Mother against him—for he had been a friend of Don Juan—by interfering with his appointments for the benefit of her nurse, the widow Quantin; and now, at the very period when Mariana had determined that the prime minister, who had failed to pay her full pension, and who alone stood between her and supreme power, should be dismissed, Marie Louise again foolishly threw her influence with her husband against the oft-threatened minister. Medina Celi, overwhelmed by his unpopularity and the insuperable difficulties of his task, was brusquely dismissed by the King in June 1685; and thenceforward Mariana was supreme. The new minister, the Count of Oropesa, was clever and active, and at first made sweeping financial reforms: but he was really the tool of the Austrian faction, which, before many months had passed, negotiated the League of Augsburg, which bound together Spain, the empire, Sweden, Bavaria and other powers, against the encroachments of Louis XIV.; and again poor, ruined Spain was pledged to enter, if called upon, into the central European war.

For the moment Louis was not prepared to meet all Europe in arms, and his views with regard to Spain had become somewhat changed. It was by this time evident that Marie Louise would bear no child to her degenerate husband, and Mariana and Mansfeldt were already preparing to put forward the claims to the succession of the children of the Empress (the Infanta Margaret, daughter of Mariana), whilst Louis XIV., making light, as he always did, of the renunciation signed by Maria Theresa on her marriage (already referred to), was determined to show that his own son, the Dauphin, had the best right to be King of Spain if

Charles II. died without issue. When, therefore, the new French ambassador, Feuquière, went to Spain early in 1685, he was instructed to talk seriously, and in secret, to Marie Louise on the subject.[1] He was to tell her that she would be wise to desist from all political intrigue directed to the change of personnel of the government, and so to gain the goodwill of the ministers and obtain a firmer hold over the King. This advice came too late, for she had foolishly connived at Medina Celi's fall before Feuquières could deliver his message. This, however, was only the first step; and in the following year Father Verjus was sent to Madrid with money and instructions to aid Feuquière in gaining friends and forming a party under the ægis of Marie Louise to push the claims of the Dauphin to the Spanish succession.

In the meantime the Austrian party, under Mariana, were having their own way unchecked. Marie Louise was their sole stumbling-block, for the King would never willingly lose sight of her, notwithstanding her follies, of which her enemies made the most; and at the instance of Mariana and her Austrian backers a dastardly series of plots was formed for ruining the young Queen in the eyes of her husband. We get the first hint of them from a letter dated 12th April 1685 in the curious informal correspondence addressed by the Duke of Montalto in Madrid to the Spanish ambassador in London, Pedro Ronquillo, both of them partisans of Mariana: 'A case of no little scandalousness has happened in the palace,' he wrote. 'You

[1] To the French ambassador who was in Spain in 1688, the Count de Rebenac, she gave the most intimate detailed reasons for her lack of issue connected with the constitution of the King. Rebenac repeated these confidences in his letters to Louis.

know, of course, that Mme. Quantin is the favourite of our Queen, and that M. Viremont, a Frenchman who takes care of the Queen's saddle horses, is also well liked by her Majesty. By these means this man introduced himself so much into the palace with the Quantin woman, that, although she wears the dress of a duenna, and is neither young nor at all handsome, there was a talk of their getting married. Everybody laughed at such a courtship; but the matter went so far and the connection was so close, for both of them are cunning enough to get out when they liked, and perhaps he may have found means to enter her chamber in the palace, that the woman was recently taken out of the palace to the house of Donna Ana de Aguirre, who is in high favour with the Queen, and it is said that this Quantin woman gave birth to a boy there the other day.[1] This scandal has caused no end of murmuring and satires, so shameless some of them as to be incredible. What is quite as incredible is the irresolution of the King. Up to the present time nothing has been done, either to the man or the woman, and Viremont continues in his employment as if nothing had happened. They are married now; but if I had my way they should be burned. Yesterday the Quantin woman went to pay her respects to the Queen with as much effrontery as if she had not behaved thus. You can see by this the state the palace is in.'[2]

We can supplement this narrative from other sources. The French widow was the only person of her own tongue and country near Marie Louise, and, though

[1] Mme. Quantin was a widow. It has been explained that all the ladies in the palace had to be maids or widows.

[2] 'Doc. Ined.,' lxxix.

she had been a dangerous companion, the poor Queen clung desperately to her. As soon as the rumour of her marriage spread the outcry for her punishment and expulsion was raised by the enemies of Marie Louise, and the Queen herself was attacked in dozens of spiteful couplets as having connived at immorality in her own apartments. The outraged Queen threw herself at her husband's feet in an agony of tears, and implored him not to expel the only French woman-servant upon whom she could depend. Charles, moved by his wife's tears, allowed Quantin to remain in Madrid, though not to sleep in the palace, and refused to believe the stories told him that Marie Louise had knowingly been a party to the irregularity of her servant.

This was to some extent a defeat for the Queen-Mother and her friends; but the scandal laid a foundation of distrust, upon which further attack might be based. This is how the Duke of Montalto speaks of the King's concession to his wife. 'I don't know whether the Quantin affair is true or not; but it is publicly stated, and is the most dreadful scandal that ever happened in the palace. Medina, Oropesa and the Confessor, all urged the King to take some step, but to no purpose, for he preferred to give way to the tears and prayers of the Queen, rather than uphold the decency of his own household. So she has triumphed to such an extent that this woman, having married the rogue Viremont, has positively been brought by the Queen into the palace again to serve her, and goes home to her husband every night! Cases of this sort are surely enough to drive one crazy, and to banish all hope of better times. Since I have told you the story I must now tell you the sequel. As soon as they were

married the woman went ostentatiously to the palace to salute the King, which he placidly allowed. The fine pair have now gone to Aranjuez with the Court, like people of quality, in one of the royal coaches. Medina Celi has thrown up everything and gone away in disgust. It is all the King's fault, and such goings on as these will expose to the world our master's tyranny and incapacity.' [1]

The further blow at the Queen was silently planned whilst the Court was at the spring palace of Aranjuez, where it usually stayed until Corpus Christi day. On the 12th May Charles fell suddenly ill, and much was made of the matter. Although, after bleeding, he was quite well on the third day, it was decided that he must immediately return to the capital. 'What must be well borne in mind in all this' (wrote an enemy of Marie Louise) 'is that the Queen wanted to prefer her own pleasure to the health of her husband; for it was almost impossible to persuade her to come to Madrid. She said that the illness was nothing, and wished to keep the King there till Corpus Christi, notwithstanding the heat and danger. When she was not allowed to have her own way, she was cross and ill-humoured; as was clear when the King was confined to his bed, for she did not even go to see him. This is the more strange, as when the Quantin woman was to be bled she must needs go and visit her without ceremony. Neither I nor any one else can understand the strange things that are going on in that house.' [2]

This was written at the end of May; and some three weeks afterwards the plot ripened. A Frenchman named Vilaine, who is called by some authorities a discharged groom of Marie Louise, and by the Duke

[1] 'Doc. Ined.,' lxxix. [2] *Ibid.*

of Montalto the waxchandler of the Queen-Mother, denounced Quantin and her husband for having plotted, with the knowledge of the Queen, to poison King Charles. The accused persons were at once arrested, and a carefully prepared hue and cry was raised against all Frenchmen. Many foreigners were attacked and some killed in the streets; the French embassy had to be surrounded by troops, and the whole Court was in a panic. Charles was a coward and miserably weak, but he stood by his wife as well as he knew how at this period of trial. Marie Louise, indignant and outraged at what she knew was a vile plot against her, demanded that the accusers should also be arrested; but before this could be done, Quantin and her husband, the French maids and others, were put to the torture; and the poor woman, with both arms broken and her lower limbs crippled for life, still maintained her innocence and would confess nothing.

The Queen's few Spanish friends were put into close confinement. No evidence whatever could be wrung from any of the accused to support the charge against them: but the Council of Castile, packed now with the Queen-Mother's partisans, still continued to regard the matter as a serious menace to the King's life, and frightened poor Charles nearly out of what small wits nature had given him. In a French news letter of the time (19th August 1685) the political aim of the proceedings is exposed. 'The Council of Spain desires to involve the Queen in the accusations, because they fear her influence over the King, and he has not sufficient strength to resist the ministers who propose to appoint commissaries for the Queen. She has written to her father, saying that she has no French person now near her, nor any one else whom she could

trust. She is, she says, in daily fear of being poisoned, and she refuses to eat what they provide for her, which has cast her into great weakness. She will only eat with the King and from his dishes. Vilaine, they say, is to be rewarded and sent to an employment in the Canaries. The French ambassador is not allowed to speak with the Queen; and the Venetian ambassador was nearly murdered, because they thought he was French. When the King is with the Queen the ministers are all in the wrong, but when they are with him he changes his mind.' [1]

Quantin and all the French people about the palace were expelled the country, when no atom of proof could be found against them, and Charles, apparently alarmed at the threats of Louis XIV., that if any harm came to Marie Louise he would avenge her by war in Spain itself, was emphatic in his repudiation of any suspicion on his part against his wife. He assured Feuquières that he regarded his wife's interests as his own, and never believed for a moment in her guilt: and he assured the Duke of Orleans that, not only did he not know that the accused French people had been tortured, but that when he asked for a copy of the whole of the proceedings in the case, his Council had assured him that the records had all been burnt. In vain, however, did the French government insist upon the punishment of the accusers. The King might promise and strive, but there were others stronger than he; and Vilaine was spirited away and rewarded.

Another news letter in the same French collection as that justed quoted does not hesitate, a few months afterwards, when the whole matter was known, to say:

[1] MSS. of Father Léonard in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. Quoted by Morel Fatio in 'Mémoires de la Cour d'Espagne.'

'Although the Quantin affair is now a thing of the past, it is nevertheless worth recording that the Count of Mansfeldt, the imperial ambassador and his wife, to please the Queen-Mother, originated the accusation against the woman. She was made to suffer the cruel tortures she did in order to injure the young Queen, who was so outraged at it, and the King as well, that the imperial ambassador is forbidden the palace, except on the business of his embassy.'

Mariana's friends looked upon it in a very different light. Whilst still the accusation was hanging over Marie Louise, Montalto wrote to Ronquillo in London: 'Quantin and her husband, and all the Frenchmen in the Queen's stable, with her bob-tailed horses, have all been packed off to France. They were a lot of rascals, and the cost of her stable was a calamity. They were all guilty, but as none of them would confess under torture, they could not be further proceeded against. People are talking very scandalously about such shameful laxity. Quantin's young niece [1] was sent out of the palace late at night, so that not a single French person should remain. But the Queen's tears and prayers soon fetched her back. This is perfectly odious and disgraceful, and one can only have contempt of so easy going a King, who will not let even justice take its course if his wife says nay.' A few weeks afterwards, the same courtier says: 'The Queen is still implacable at the loss of her Quantins, and the King so excessively loving (not to call it by another name) of his wife, that all his concessions to her, which ought to make her more submissive to him, makes her

[1] This was Susanne Duperroy, to whom Marie Louise left 3,000 doubloons in her will. Mme. Quantin herself received a legacy of 4,000 from the Queen.

humour worse, and the temper that God gave her causes no end of trouble as it is; for it is the most extravagant ever seen.'[1]

The French servants of the Queen, her only solace, all except the girl Duperroy, had been sent away; but still Marie Louise personally had held her place in the King's affection. No sooner, however, had the Quantin affair fallen a little into the background, than another stab more wicked still was aimed at the Queen by the same hands out of the darkness. There was a foolish, vain, French exon of the guard, the Chevalier Saint Chamans, who had commanded Marie Louise's escort when she travelled to the Spanish frontier. As was not unusual in the French Court at the time, Saint Chamans was pleased to profess a far-off amorous worship of the lovely Princess; and it is quite probable that during his attendance upon her, she may have smiled in raillery at his silly languishing airs. In any case, the talk of his adoration reached Madrid; and in the autumn of 1685, some miscreant in the capital of Spain wrote two letters as from the Queen in a forged hand imitating hers, to Saint Chamans, containing expressions to the highest degree compromising of her honour. Saint Chamans, like the love-lorn fool that he was, showed the letters to his chums, and Louis XIV. soon learnt of their existence, and what is more extraordinary, believed them to be genuine. In sorrow and severe reprobation, he wrote to Feuquières, directing him to show the letters to the Queen, which he did in September.

Marie Louise, outraged at the mere suspicion, and indignant at so cruel a hoax, rose for once majestic and dignified in her wrath. She scribbled a burning

[1] 'Doc. Ined.,' lxxix

repudiation of the letters which she handed to Feuquières for ciphered transmission to the King of France.[1] 'It will not be difficult for your Majesty to imagine the affliction in which I am, at knowing that you suspect a person such as I of so unworthy a thing as this. I cannot avoid expressing my justified sorrow at seeing that your Majesty does not esteem at its true worth, as you should, conduct which is most regular, and which certainly is not of the easiest. . . . but as I am so unhappy as to have people near me here perfidious and abominable enough to use every effort to ruin me by pernicious inventions, I am not surprised that they should exert all their ingenuity to deprive me of the esteem of your Majesty. . . . Believe me, nothing is more false than that which you have thought of me, and my despair to see that your Majesty doubts for a moment my good behaviour, makes me, in this, stand apart from your counsel, and be myself alone; and I cannot think of the injustice your Majesty has done me without being beside myself with sorrow. Alas! I had made light of all my grief, believing that your Majesty, at least, thought well of me: but I see now I am marked for unhappiness, since your Majesty believes a thing of me which makes me shudder even to think of. . . . I am so jealous of my honour, and I love it so much, that I shall never do anything to stain it: and life itself is not so insupportable to me, either, that I should seek thus to lose it. . . . If I were in a more tranquil state, I should supplicate your Majesty to have pity upon this poor realm for my sake; but I dare not, though I think you will be good enough to recollect that I have the

[1] The letter is in the Archives of the Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Paris, vol. 71. It has been transcribed by M. Morel Fatio.

honour to be your niece, and that all my happiness depends upon you. . . . Believe me, too, when I say that I am prouder of being born a princess of your blood, than of the rank I hold in the world': and so on, for several pages, the wronged and outraged Queen eloquently protests her innocence.

Thenceforward Marie Louise, though entirely without political influence—for the Austrian faction and the Queen-Mother were in that respect all-powerful—was unassailable in the affections of the poor man she had married. Her disregard of the ordinary Spanish etiquette, the free and easy *bonhomie* of her demeanour, and the indulgence of her caprices increased as she felt more secure in the love of her husband; but she made no other use of her influence over him. No better series of pictures of the life in her palace can be found than in the vitriolic references to Marie Louise and her husband in letters already quoted of the Duke of Montalto. On the 30th August 1685, he writes that for months the Queen had not gone out in public, in which, he says, she was wise, particularly when the anti-French riots were taking place, as the mob might have attacked her. 'They say again that she is pregnant, but there is not much belief in it, as the same thing has happened several times before. She had got up a very grand comedy for St. Louis' day; but it had to be deferred, because of this pregnancy rumour, and not even the usual comedies in the palace were given for the same reason.

On the 24th October of the same year, he records the removal of the Court to the Retiro: 'which place the Queen is very fond of, because there she can enjoy her country sports, and especially ride about on

horseback every afternoon. In order to have her horses nearer to her, she has had a place made for them near the large pond, where she goes every morning to visit them.' A little later he remarks that everything in the palace is going to the dogs. 'There is neither firmness nor stability enough to correct these follies of the Queen.' In April 1686, the same writer says: 'Things are in the greatest embarrassment for the government, owing to the fancies and caprices of the Queen; for nothing is done by any other rule than her whim.' It appears that the presence of the Queen's Spanish friend Señora Aguirre, who had been exiled at the time of the Quantin affair, was much desired by Marie Louise, and the latter demanded her return of the prime minister, Oropesa. He temporised for a time, but when she ordered him peremptorily to advise the King to recall the lady, he refused. 'Well,' said the Queen, 'do not oppose it if the King suggests it.' 'Yes I will,' replied the minister: whereupon Marie Louise went with tears and blandishments to her husband, and begged for the favour. For a time he held out; but at last gave way to the extent of ordering a decree of recall to be drafted and discussed. Oropesa protested, and Charles cancelled the decree. Another passionate outburst from the Queen followed, and in the end she had her way. 'The coming of this woman (Aguirre) will be worse than all the devils together; worse than Quantin. Judge what a state we are in with this irresolution of our master. The advice of ministers and decisions of tribunals, all are powerless before the will of this woman (the Queen).'

The caprices of Marie Louise soon reached the

ears of her uncle Louis, and he did, in May 1686, what he ought to have done years before, namely, to send a French lady of great position and experience, dependent upon him, to advise the Queen and keep her in the right way. The lady was a descendant of the royal house, the Countess of Soissons, and her mission was, if possible, to induce Marie Louise to turn her influence to political account for the benefit of France. Her task was almost hopeless from the first, and she failed, though she tried hard for a time; and in the last few weeks of the Queen's life, when too late, was of some service to French interests.

'The Queen' (writes Montalto in May 1586) 'is in the full force of her madness, dominating the King completely by cries and threats. He has not an atom of resolution, and no application at all. The day upon which the great council was held, when he would not attend, he went on muleback to the wild beast cages at the Retiro, and there he had the animals caught and counted, thinking more of this frivolity than if it had been some heroic action. This government of ours is nothing more than a boy's school with the master away. No one respects anything, and each person does as he likes, whilst the Queen follows her whim or the last suggestion.' On another occasion, when the Marquis of Los Velez was giving a representation of a sacred *auto* on a holy day, Montalto records that 'the Queen witnessed the show from a balcony in the passage, when she behaved herself so unrestrainedly as to shock people; and the actions of this lady really give rise to the idea that she is not in her right mind.'

The unfortunate woman kept apparently on friendly, but not cordial, terms with Mariana, who smilingly

let her go her own way without remonstrance; and there was now no check whatever upon her strange vagaries, for the King grew more feeble-minded than ever, and was as clay in her hands. 'The Queen's levity approaches light-headedness,' wrote Montalto in the summer of 1687. 'She was lately ill with fever, owing to the rubbish she is always eating. Nobody can control her, and she looks consumptive. Those of us who are not much attached to her are not sorry to see her afflicted.' Utterly reckless in her mode of life the unhappy woman, though still but twenty-five years of age, was already losing her health and beauty. In July Montalto reports that 'the Queen still continues in her extravagant conduct, and no amendment can now be expected. She is dreadfully thin and languid, and will take no remedies but those prescribed by her own caprice and distrust. As for the King, I say nothing, for I have already said so much, though not half enough.'

And so, through the summer, matters went from bad to worse. There was no guidance from the King, no stability or prudence from the Queen, and Spain drifted helpless towards the whirlpool of civil war that was soon to engulf her. The only care of old Mariana was to watch over the interests of her own kin in their claims to the succession to the Spanish crown, and paralyse the promotion of the French pretensions. Writing from the palace on the 29th August 1687, Montalto says: 'It is impossible to exaggerate the terrible state of things here. This palace is boiling over with disorder and scandalous stories to such an extent as to be simply a mass of confusion. The Queen is so extravagant in her conduct, and has so strange a character, that I dare not write, even in

cypher, what is going on. The King knows, but remedies nothing. It seems as if God had endowed him neither with force nor application for anything; and the same wretched laxity is seen in the government of the realm. He gives no more than a quarter of an hour to business in the day, and the whole of the rest of his time is spent in such trifles as running backwards and forwards through these saloons, and from balcony to balcony, like a child of six, and his conversation would match about the same age. The Queen is dreadfully ill and thin, and has quarrelled with the Queen-Mother.'

Months later, in May 1688, when the war between France and the empire was recommencing, and Spain was once more arming for a conflict not primarily her own, Montalto wrote, in more despondent spirit than ever, of the condition of affairs in Madrid. 'Yesterday it was my turn for duty at the Retiro. I used to like it, but now I dread the day that takes me there. Of course I know even when I am not there what is going on with our master; but it is very shocking to see it close, and, so to speak, face to face. The neglect everywhere is quite terrible. The King's great business whilst I was there was to see the matting taken up in the rooms, and to count the pins and other trifles of that sort. The Queen blurts out whatever comes uppermost, and indulges to the full in her craze for riding on horseback, prancing about indecorously over the neighbourhood. She has again had her ladies mounted, knowing that the King hates to see it. She has her way and, dead against his will, she insists upon acting the principal boy's part in a comedy they are rehearsing. As usual, she will do as she likes. There are constant tourneys and balls

because she insists upon them, and there is no influence or reason that can keep her within bounds. The Queen-Mother pays great attention to her, but is cruelly slighted by her.'

A week later, the same writer continues in a similar strain, saying that the Queen had insisted upon the comedy being written specially for her to take the boy's part: but she had fallen ill and the performance had been postponed. 'The King is totally opposed to this prank; but of course she has her way. She has had a magnificent theatre constructed at the Retiro, with lavish ornaments, etc., for the ladies, in which she has wasted thousands of ducats, and yet there is not a real for urgent needs. The King is a cypher, and allows things to be done before him of which he entirely disapproves. I positively dread my turn of duty, for I see the King does nothing but run about like an imp, and if he goes into the garden it is only to pick strawberries and count them.'

A week or so later Marie Louise had recovered her health, and the long-prepared comedy was played with great brilliancy. The King went to the full rehearsal two days before the public performance; and although shocked and annoyed by his wife's caprice in playing a male part, had not strength of will enough to forbid it. When, however, the piece was represented publicly, and all the principal ladies in Madrid, with the gentlemen of the household, were present to praise and applaud, poor, unstable Charles was so charmed with his wife, even on the stage, that he testified his delight at her performance, and the entertainment was repeated again and again during the summer.

Once more at this time there was a belief that the Queen was pregnant, and the hopes of the French

party ran high, though they were soon seen to be fallacious as before. Montalto, reporting the matter to Ronquillo, says that the Queen had explained, in answer to an inquiry of her father, the Duke of Orleans, that the reason for her lack of issue was not the impotence of the King but his excessive concupiscence, 'which,' says the writer, 'I do not understand, though the effect is plain.'

In the autumn of 1688 Marie Louise fell ill of smallpox in the palace of Madrid; and in her enfeebled state of health the disease was held to be dangerous. She was a bad patient, self-willed in her rejection of the remedies prescribed to her by the only physician she would receive, a Florentine doctor she had known in Paris in attendance upon the Balbeses. The King was to have started for the Escorial at the time his wife was attacked by the malady, and was obliged to delay his departure, though fear of contagion kept him away from the invalid. Montalto reports, with characteristic ill-nature: 'The King seems sorry; but he is more sorry at having to postpone his journey to the Escorial. For although his feeling towards his wife appears to be affection, I maintain that it is more fear of her than anything else.' Before she was fit to be moved the Queen insisted upon being carried in a Sedan chair to the Retiro to pass her period of convalescence there, first visiting the church of the Atocha, whilst Charles departed to spend a month at the Escorial.

Left alone in her solitary convalescence, Marie Louise appears to have developed a more devout spirit than had previously characterised her, and at the same time lost her desire to live. During the period of low vitality which followed her illness one

of her ladies begged her to summon a famous saintly man, to pray for her prompt restoration to strength. 'No, no,' she replied, 'I will not do so. It would be folly indeed to ask for life which matters so little.' When, at this juncture, the representatives of the town of Madrid offered to build a new church as a votive offering for her restoration to health, she was no less emphatic. If the money of the suffering subjects was to be spent upon the building she would not allow it to be done.

She had, indeed, little left to live for. Wedded to the fribble we have described, and with enemies of herself and her dear France everywhere around her, she must have felt powerless to cope with the adverse influences opposed to her. All the love she had to give was given long ago, before she was called upon to make the great renunciation which had been made in vain. So long as youth and sensuous vitality had remained to her she had sought in reckless enjoyment to stifle the horror of the loveless life to which she was condemned: but when the capacity for bodily gratification was gone, Marie Louise lost her desire to live.

Spain was trembling upon the brink of a great war with France, and during the winter succeeding the Queen's illness Count Rebenac was in Madrid with what amounted to an ultimatum to Spain to abandon the league of Augsburg, formed to crush the ambition of Louis. Rebenac often saw the Queen, and coached by him and by the Countess of Soissons, she endeavoured, now that matters had gone too far, to employ her hold upon her husband in a political direction, and to frustrate the policy of the Queen-Mother in keeping Spain in offensive and defensive

alliance with the Emperor. Her influence upon Charles was great, and he began to incline to the side of the French against his mother. Marie Louise pointed out to him the awful condition of destitution in which his country lay, and painted in moving words the horrors of a war in which Spain had all to lose and could not hope to gain. Charles was gentle and tender-hearted, hating to see or hear of suffering, and Rebenac reported early in February 1689 that the efforts of the Queen had been effectual, and that he had great hopes of the success of his mission.[1]

It was a great crisis, for a withdrawal of Spain at this point from the alliance would have meant the predominance of France in Europe thenceforward, and the defeat of the Austrian party in Spain. Mariana and her friends were strong and determined; the King was weak and unstable. Only the life of a languid woman, tired of the struggle, stood between them and victory, and Marie Louise herself seems to have had a prophetic knowledge that such an obstacle would not be allowed to frustrate plans so deeply laid. As usual with Spanish sovereigns, the Queen went every week to worship at the shrine of the Virgin of Atocha, and on Tuesday the 9th February 1689, when she took leave of the prior of the convent church, she told him that she should meet him no more on earth. That night after her light repast of milk and honey the Queen was seized with convulsions, violent pains and vomiting; a colic it was called, which brought her to the lowest extremity of weakness. From the first she knew that she was doomed and made no effort. In

[1] 'Recueil des Instructions aux Ambassadeurs Français,' Paris, 1894, and 'Correspondance de Rebenac, Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères.'

the intervals of the burning agony she suffered, her confessor asked her if there was anything that troubled her. 'I am in peace, Father,' she replied, 'and am very glad to die.' She lingered in pain until the early hours of the 12th February; and then the most beautiful and ill-fated princess of the house of Bourbon breathed her last, a martyr, if ever one lived, upon the altar of her country; but a martyr sacrificed in vain, for she was immolated, not by her own will, but by the will of others.

All that Marie Louise asked of life was love, and that was the one thing denied to her. The Spanish people, who had sometimes been cruel to her because she was a foreigner, were shocked by her untimely death: but before the pompous procession which bore the body of Marie Louise to its last resting-place in the inferior mausoleum in the Escorial reserved for sterile Queens, whispers ran through Spain and France that it was no colic that had cut short the life of Marie Louise, but poison administered in the interests of Mariana and the Austrian faction. No proof has ever been adduced that this was the case, for evidence in such a matter would naturally not be easily obtainable;[1] but the death of the Queen, at the very crisis when, by her

[1] The tragic end of the Queen so distressed the French ambassador Rebenac that for a time he lost his reason after attending the funeral ceremony. In his subsequent correspondence with the King of France he made no secret of his belief that she had been murdered. The Duchess of Orleans, the Queen's stepmother, thus refers to Rebenac's statements in her correspondence: 'Rebenac's feelings have done no wrong to our young Queen of Spain. It is the sharp-nosed Count of Mansfeldt who poisoned her.' De Torcy, in his 'Memoires,' says: 'The Count of Mansfeldt and Count Oropesa are both suspected of having been the authors of Marie Louise's death, and take little care to exonerate themselves. The Marquis de Louville, in his 'Mémoires,' also distinctly states that the Queen was poisoned, and several other contemporary French authorities are no less certain.

aid, the King had been turned to the side of France, seems in all the circumstances to have been too providential to her enemies to have been entirely accidental. At any rate it was effectual in changing the whole aspect of affairs immediately ; and before the mourning for Marie Louise had lost its freshness, the French ambassador was on his way home unsuccessful, Spain was again at war with France, and negotiations were being actively carried on to find a German wife for the wretched crétin who wore the crown of Spain.

BOOK V

II

MARIE ANNE OF NEUBURG

BOOK V

ALMOST simultaneously with the death of Marie Louise an event happened which to a large extent altered the political balance of Europe, and placed at further disadvantage the French partisans in Madrid. The Prince of Orange had surprised the world by becoming King of England, practically without opposition. It was no longer a shifty Stuart with French sympathies and an itching palm for the bribes of Louis who directed the policy of Great Britain, but a prince whose very existence was bound up in the exclusion of France from Flanders; a prince, moreover, under whom England and Holland were for the first time really united. The coalition against Louis was infinitely strengthened thereby, and Spain, with Mariana at the helm, was now less likely than ever to shirk the fulfilment of her obligations under the Treaty of Augsburg. Madrid thereafter became for a time a prime centre of international intrigues, aimed at the exclusion of French interest from the Peninsula. Charles had no personal desire to marry again. He was afraid of fresh people about him; he was overborne with the responsibilities of his great position, and, although he was only twenty-eight, his feeble powers of mind and body were already on the wane. Left to himself, he would have desired nothing but to throw up matrimony as a failure, so far as he was concerned, and live in peace, after his own fashion,

until on his deathbed he left his realm to an heir of his own choosing.

But the antagonistic factions that divided his Court between them decided that such a course was quite impossible. It could hardly have been with the hope, as they professed, that issue would be more likely from a second marriage than it had been from the first, for Charles had been really enamoured with Marie Louise, who had been his consort during the best period of such vigour as he ever possessed. It is more likely that the haste to get him married was prompted by the desire of the intriguers to have by his side, when he was called upon to settle the succession, a wife favourable to the views of the dominant party. Badgered and pestered on all sides, the poor creature, always anxious to do what he was told was his duty, consented to take another wife.

The opponents of the German interest at first suggested a princess of Portugal, but Mariana and her friends took care that the negotiations should fall through; and, at the Queen-Mother's instance, Charles consented to leave the choice of a fit bride for him to his uncle and brother-in-law, the Emperor Leopold. The latter, who had only one daughter by his first wife the Infanta Margarita, Mariana's daughter, had married as his second wife, by whom he had sons, Eleanor of Neuburg-Bavaria, daughter of the Elector Palatine, Duke of Neuburg. This lady had a sister of twenty-two, Marie Anne of Neuburg; and upon her the choice of the Emperor fell to be the wife of Charles II., King of Spain.

Three months after Marie Louise died the marriage-treaty was signed; and on the 18th August 1689, late at night in the quaint Bavarian town of Neuburg on

the Danube, the tall, angular girl with hard eyes and mouth, was led by the Spanish ambassador through the bedizened throng of princes and princesses of Austria, Bavaria and Hesse, who crowded the church of the Jesuits, to be wedded to her nephew, the young King of Hungary, the Emperor's heir, as proxy for the King of Spain, the officiating priest being her brother, Prince Alexander. The marriage was regarded by all Europe as a pledge that thenceforward Spain would be firmly united with the Germanic interests against Louis XIV., and the challenge was promptly accepted by the French King. Thenceforward, for seven years, all Europe was at war; and Spain, which only needed rest, was forced not only to waste blood and treasure upon foreign fields, but to fight for the integrity of its own soil in Catalonia, North Africa and America.

England, under the Dutch King, had taken an active part in promoting an alliance which drew Spain closer to the Teutonic league; and only an English fleet was available to convey the new Queen of Spain in safety to her husband's realm. Through Cologne and Rotterdam, Marie Anne and her train of Germans slowly travelled to Flushing in the late autumn of 1689, costly jewels meeting her as gifts, now from her husband, now from her gratified mother-in-law, who regarded her coming as a triumph for herself.[1] At Flushing a powerful English fleet, under Admiral Russell, awaited the bride; and after much delay, and not a few mishaps, the squadron sailed for Spain late in January 1690. The intention had been to land the Queen at the port of Santander; and her Spanish

[1] The jewels taken by Count Benavente from Charles was valued at 180,000 crowns, and Mariana's gift to her daughter-in-law 30,000.

household was on the road thither to receive her, when news reached them that Corunna had been chosen as a better harbour, and to the extreme north-west corner of Spain they wended their way. Bad weather, as is not unusual in the Bay of Biscay in mid-winter, made the voyage of the Queen a dangerous and difficult one; and on approaching Corunna it was found that the storm was too violent for the ships to enter. Colonel Stanhope, the English ambassador, who accompanied the Queen to Spain, says:[1] 'We were forced into a small port called Ferrol, three leagues short of the Groyne (*i.e.*, Corunna), and by the ignorance of a Spanish pilot our ships fell foul one with another, and the admiral's ship was aground for some hours, but got off clear without any damage.'

To Ferrol came hurrying the Spanish household from Corunna, with the inevitable Mansfeldt, all not a little ruffled at this game of hide-and-seek with the German Queen in the most inclement season of the year; and at length, on the 6th April, after nearly a fortnight's stay on board of Russell's ship in the harbour of Ferrol, Marie Anne and a great train of German, English and Spanish attendants landed in the barges of the English squadron, whose decorations and the smartness of the oarsmen aroused the surprised admiration of the Spaniards.[2] Though the officials did their best to give Marie Anne a stately welcome at Corunna, and the Count de Lemos entertained her and her Court at a splendid festival at his house at Puente de Ume, all was not harmonious. The general feeling in Spain was against the German connection, and especially against the ruinous war with France

[1] Stanhope Correspondence in Lord Mahon's 'Spain under Charles II.'
[2] 'Reinas Catolicas,' Father Florez.

that it entailed, and Count Mansfeldt, the imperial ambassador, was especially detested. The people at large firmly believed that he had connived at the poisoning of Marie Louise, and his overbearing manners had offended the courtiers.

'I find,' writes Stanhope, 'that the Queen's reception has been much meaner than it would have been out of a pique the Spanish grandees have against Count Mansfeldt, who was preferred before them all to the honour of bringing her over, by the favour of the Queen-Mother and contrary to the advice of the Council of Castile.'[1] Nor did the demeanour of Marie Anne mend matters, for, even thus early, her stiff imperious manner and her hasty temper struck a chill in the hearts of the Spaniards, who place so high a value upon an amiable exterior. Dressed in the traditional Spanish garb, which suited her unbending mien, the Queen sat unmoved at the bullfights, tourneys, masquerades and other festivities offered in her honour by the storied cities through which she passed on her way to Valladolid. Nobles who knelt to greet her received but a cold recognition of their compliments, and the cheers of the populace awoke no smile of gratification upon the lips of Marie Anne of Neuburg.

Charles was not an eager wooer this time, and awaited calmly the coming of his new wife to Valladolid. On Ascension Day, 4th May 1690, he first met his bride. There was little or no pretence of affection on either side; but from the first Marie Anne took the lead and imposed her will upon her husband. The marriage feasts at Valladolid and the stereotyped gaieties that throughout Spain celebrated the marriage, pleased the thoughtless, but the more reflecting knew

[1] Stanhope Correspondence.

that the war for which Spain was being again squeezed dry by every empirical resource that ingenuity and ignorance of finance could devise, was a direct result of the series of alliances that the German marriage cemented, and many were the whispered curses uttered against the boorish Germans and Englishmen, who were not only disrespectful, but heretics to boot. With exactly the same ceremonial as had marked the entry of the beautiful Marie Louise into the capital ten years before, Marie Anne rode from the Buen Retiro to the old Alcazar through the crowded streets, on the 22nd May 1690. Again, behind the half-closed jalousies, in the house of Count Oñate in the Calle Mayor, over against the church of St. Philip, Charles II. and his mother, growing visibly old now, witnessed the passing of the new Queen.

The triumph of Mariana at the coming of a German bride for her son was short lived. The time that Marie Anne had spent at the Buen Retiro previous to the State entry had been sufficient to show the mother-in-law that she had met her match, and that here there was no gentle, submissive, young creature — no thoughtless beauty who would ruin herself if encouraged to go her own way, like poor Marie Louise— but a hard, passionate woman, who was determined, whatever happened to Spain, to make the best of her opportunities for her own advantage. Mariana, in accordance with her usual policy, endeavoured at first to co-operate harmoniously with her daughter-in-law, in order to gain predominance in the partnership afterwards. The sole minister, Oropesa, had done his best to relieve the suffering country, and his financial reforms had effected some improvement; but with the renewal of the war on land and sea, the economies

were soon swallowed up, and the penury became as pressing as ever. The minister's subordinates were rapacious and corrupt to an extent unexampled even in Spain, and offices, dignities, titles, and pensions were openly put up to the highest bidder. Oropesa, though fairly honest himself, had an ambitious, greedy wife, who increased his unpopularity; and when Marie Anne arrived in Madrid, the party inimical to the minister was already powerful.

Mariana had been Oropesa's patron, but when the new Queen, for whose aims it was necessary to form a party in Spain, sided with the enemies of the minister, Mariana dared not take the unpopular and weaker side, and reluctantly agreed with her daughter-in-law that Oropesa and the corrupt crew that followed him should be deposed. Their principal abettors were the King's confessor, Father Matilla, the Archbishops of Toledo (Cardinal Portocarrero) and Saragossa, the Constable of Castile, and the Secretary of State, Lira, formerly a creature of Oropesa. Marie Anne and the confessor gave the poor King no rest. Charles was deeply attached to Oropesa; he dreaded new people about him; and for a time he refused to dismiss his minister. Marie Anne suffered, when contradicted, from hysterical nervous crises, that were said to threaten her life, and every one, from her husband downward, went in mortal fear of provoking an attack by saying anything displeasing to her.[1] The confessor Matilla finally threatened the King that he would not give him absolution, unless he did his duty to the country by dismissing Oropesa.

Charles, beset on all sides, at first told everything to Oropesa himself, but that made matters worse; and he

[1] 'Modesto Lafuente Historia de España.'

then repeated to each party exactly what the other said, with the result that the palace itself became a hot-bed of scandal, hatred, and all uncharitableness. At length Marie Anne had her way, and Charles sent for his minister with tears in his eyes and told him that his enemies had demanded his retirement. 'They wish it,' sobbed the unhappy man, 'and I must agree to it:' and then, in the deepest sorrow, he dismissed the best minister he had ever had, in obedience to a palace intrigue led by his German wife. Before Oropesa went into banishment at the end of June 1691, he sought an interview with the Queen, but was refused, and Mariana with difficulty was prevailed upon to receive her former instrument; her ungracious farewell of him being to tell him that he ought to have gone long before.[1]

A sort of commission of government was then formed entirely composed of men in the interests of Marie Anne; and thenceforward all method and regularity in the administration disappeared. The King referred questions submitted to him to any person who happened to be near him, and the letters of Colonel Stanhope at the time testify to the impossibility of getting any official business done at all. The country was in the midst of war; the French were masters of the best part of Catalonia, and as the English ambassador reports, the Spaniards had not 4,000 men there in all, fit for service, and in four months' vigorous recruiting only 1,000 men could be got. A handful of men, he says, dashing down from the French frontier, could easily capture Madrid itself, as not a soldier is between the Pyrenees and the capital: and, such was the confusion, that it was

[1] Stanhope Correspondence.

dangerous to drive out a mile from the walls of Madrid for fear of violence and robbery.

Marie Anne with her camarilla was mistress of the situation, and then Mariana, when it was difficult to regain her lost power, discovered what the aims of her German daughter-in-law were. It will be recollected that Mariana's daughter, the Infanta Margaret, Empress, had died, leaving one daughter married to the Elector of Bavaria, and it was naturally her son, the boy Prince of Bavaria, to whom Mariana had looked to inherit the Spanish crown, in default of issue to Charles, and in accordance with the will of Philip IV. Marie Anne's mission from the Emperor and his second wife was, however, quite a different one, and aroused in Mariana the hottest indignation when she fully understood it. The plan was to put aside both the female lines descended from the daughters of Philip IV., Maria Theresa, Queen of France, and the Empress Margaret, and to claim the succession of the Emperor's second son by his second marriage with Marie Anne's sister, by virtue of his male descent from the Emperor Ferdinand, brother of Charles V.

Marie Anne had around her a gang of blood-suckers almost as rapacious as herself, and, so long as they were Spaniards, the people suffered in silence.[1] But the Queen's most intimate councillors were Germans, who, undeterred by the fate of Nithard, vied with the Spaniards in grasping greed: and this aroused against Marie Anne the hatred of all who did not share in the booty. The strongest spirit in the Queen's entourage

[1] Stanhope says: 'Our new junta, which raisd so great expectations, at first, is now grown almost a jest; especially since, at the time they took away all pensions from poor widows and orphans, the Duke of Osuna, one of the richest men in Spain, procured himself a pension of 6000 crowns a year for life, by intercession of the confessor.'

was the Baroness Berlips, to whom the crowd had given the nickname of 'the partridge,' from a slight resemblance in her name to the name of the bird in Castilian. Another German member was one Henry Jovier, a lame man of infamous character, who had served in the Spanish army, and to these after the first few months was added the Queen's Capuchin confessor Father Chiusa, also a German, who was brought purposely to replace the Jesuit confessor first appointed, the latter having been found not sufficiently pliant for the place.

This was the gang that principally advised the Queen in her measures, and, with a few Spanish grandees, especially the Duke of Montalto and the Admiral of Castile, practically formed the government. Mariana was treated with the greatest *hauteur* by her daughter-in-law, but had some of the ablest men in Spain on her side, of whom Cardinal Portocarrero was the most influential. The populace cordially hated Marie Anne, and dreaded the imperial domination of Spain which she represented; whilst she took no pains to disguise her contempt for them. Louis XIV., in describing the state of affairs shortly after this in his instructions to his ambassador, Harcourt, says: 'The Queen has acquired such a dominion over the spirit of her husband that it may be said that she alone reigns as sovereign of Spain. . . . The authority of the Queen, however, is founded rather upon the fear of her anger than upon any love for her on the part of the nation. There is no people in the world so sensitive of praise as the Spaniards; and consequently none who are so much affected by contempt. The Queen professes contempt for the whole nation, and, as offensive discourse is the only revenge of those

who are excluded from power, it is not surprising to hear all the evil things that the public detestation causes to be said about her. It is, however, very true that she gives plenty of reasons for the reproaches levelled against her with regard to her avidity in receiving and extorting presents; and there is no one more ingenious than she in finding excuses for appropriating everything that is most valuable in Madrid, and for amassing every day fresh treasure for herself.'[1]

In the spring of 1683 the King's weakness became so alarming that the physicians almost abandoned hope, and the intrigues around him grew in intensity. The last successful effort of Marie Louise before her death had been to extract from her husband a solemn promise that he would never cede to the persuasions of Mariana to appoint a successor to the crown until he had received the last sacrament on his deathbed; and the King had managed so far to withstand all pressure put upon him to do so. The pressure was redoubled now, especially by Marie Anne, who took the opportunity of his illness to urge him to summon the Archduke Charles to Madrid, and adopt him as his successor. When the unfortunate King was wavering some one, probably Cardinal Portocarrero, warned him of the certain consequences, and whilst the hesitation continued the King partially recovered.

Whilst the Court was thus given over to discord the condition of the country grew worse and worse. The Marquis of Mancera told Stanhope that the King was only nominally sovereign of the realms of Aragon. Spain, but for the power of her allies, was absolutely defenceless, and the public distress had reached to

[1] 'Recueil des Instructions,' etc.

such an extent that famine stalked unchecked through the land, and to protect the capital from depletion of food, a strict cordon was placed around it, to search every one entering or leaving the city. The Duke of Montalto had managed to ingratiate himself with the Queen sufficiently to obtain recognition as minister; and his impracticable remedy was to divide the country into four autonomous provinces, ruled by viceroys practically independent of a central government. Against this violation of the constitutions all Spain cried aloud. 'These disasters coming so thick,' writes Stanhope in July 1694, 'has raised a very high ferment in the minds of people here, which expresses itself in great insolencies to the great men as they pass in the streets, and to one of the greatest even in the King's palace: and the royal authority itself begins to lose its veneration, several scandalous pasquins being fixed in several public places, magnifying the great King of France and with very little respect to his Catholic Majesty, inasmuch as if Mr. Russell had not appeared with his squadron as he did, it is generally believed some public scandals would have followed.'

A few months later the same correspondent writes that the hatred of the public had greatly increased the strength of the faction opposed to Marie Anne, whose great influence over the King they intended to destroy; beginning if possible with the banishment of her bosom friend, Baroness Berlips. 'This lady's son, Baron Berlips, lately made his entry here, as envoy from the King of Poland, and as he went to his audience in the King's coach, a company of ruffians came to the coach side giving him and his mother very ill names; one of them saying, 'Let us kill the dog.' Another replied, 'Not now, for he is in the King's coach.' Nothing is

so much talked about at present as ousting the Berlips, and then they think their monarchy safe.'

Cardinal Portocarrero, who was the Queen's prime opponent, grew in boldness as he saw that public feeling was on his side, and both he and Mariana, when she could obtain access to her son, implored him to withstand the pressure of his termagant wife, and decline to divert the succession from that laid down by his father's will, which made the Prince of Bavaria his heir. At the end of 1694 the Cardinal presented a formal State paper to the King, urging the expulsion of Marie Anne's German camarilla and the royal confessor Matilla, who were ruining the country by placing and maintaining in power men utterly unworthy to administer the government. The wretched King, between the hectoring of his wife, the exhortations of his mother, the warnings of rival churchmen, and the clamours of his people, swayed first to one side, and then to the other, hating to discuss what was to take place when he was dead; yet hearing of very little else. His health, in the meanwhile, visibly declined; and all parties thought that there was no time to waste. The Queen feeling probably the need for some stronger personality near her than Berlips, and the few other inferior Germans who formed her council, soon caused herself to be reinforced by an imperial ambassador, Count Harrach, one of the ablest diplomatists in the Emperor's service, and the party of old Mariana and her Bavarian grandson fell into the background.

Mariana, indeed, was now almost past struggling; afflicted by a mortal disease and abandoned by her physicians. She resorted, as usual, to charms and quackery of the most revolting description;[1] but, in

[1] Stanhope Correspondence, 3rd May 1696.

spite of incantations and empirical devices, Mariana in May 1696 ended her turbulent life, leaving the question of the succession still in the balance.[1] With the death of the old Queen it was thought that the chance of the little Bavarian prince had disappeared; and Marie Anne pushed more energetically than ever the claims of her nephew, the Archduke Charles. Soon the King fell so seriously ill again that his life was despaired of, and the attempts of the Queen to obtain a will in the favour of the Archduke were redoubled. Like all semi-imbeciles, however, Charles, when once an idea had been drilled into his head, clung to it tenaciously; and though, for the sake of peace, he seemed to agree with his wife, he did not forget his father's will and his mother's injunction, that his own sister's descendants had a better right to succeed him than a distant relative like the Archduke. Count Benavente, his lord of the bedchamber, although appointed by Marie Anne, was secretly against the Austrian; and, with his knowledge and that of Cardinal Portocarrero alone, Charles signed a secret will, appointing his great nephew the child prince of Bavaria heir to his crown.

Once again he recovered sufficiently to rise from his bed; and Stanhope wrote on the 19th September 1696; 'The King's danger is over for a time, but his constitution is so very weak and broken, much beyond his age, that it is feared what may be the success of another attack. They cut his hair off in this sickness, which the decay of nature had almost done before, all

[1] Stanhope reports, 'There is now great noise of a miracle done by a piece of a waistcoat she died in, on an old lame nun, who, in great faith, earnestly desired it, and no sooner applied it to her lips, but she was perfectly well and threw away her crutches. This, with some other stories that will not be wanting, may in time grow up to a canonisation.' Correspondence in 'Spain under Charles II.'

his crown being bald. He has a ravenous stomach, and swallows all he eats whole; for his nether jaw stands out so much that his two rows of teeth cannot meet; to compensate which he has a prodigious wide throat, so that a gizzard or a liver of a hen passes down whole, and his weak stomach not being able to digest it he voids it in the same manner.'

No sooner was the immediate danger over than Marie Anne wormed out of the King that he had made his will in favour of the Bavarian. Her rage and indignation knew no bounds, and she upbraided the King with hysterical violence, to which he retorted by childish outbursts, leading to the smashing of crockery, furniture, and the like, and usually ending in tears. Oropesa, who had just returned to Court reconciled to Marie Anne, added his persuasions to those of the Queen and the threats of the confessor, but for a time without success. In November 1696 Stanhope reports that the King was still very ill, and obliged to keep his bed: 'although they sometimes make him rise out of his bed, much against his will and beyond his strength, the better to conceal his illness abroad. He is not only extremely weak in body, but has a great weight of melancholy and discontent upon his spirits, attributed in a great measure to the Queen's continual importunities to make him alter his will.'

At length, in September 1697, the sick man could withstand the pressure no longer; and during another grave attack,[1] at the instance of his wife and Harrach,

[1] His recovery from this attack was attributed to the body of St. Diego, which was brought to his bed; and when the King got better, amidst the great rejoicings and bullfights to celebrate the miracle, Charles and his wife spent some days at Alcalá worshipping the grim relic.—*Stanhope.*

tore up the will appointing the Prince of Bavaria his heir. Portocarrero had gone so far as to threaten to call the Cortes together to confirm the will, and had exhorted the King to stand firm, but he had been powerless as against the strong will of Marie Anne. For a long time, however, Charles still held out against making another will in favour of the Austrian; and only, at last, by threats and cajolery was he induced to write a letter to the Emperor asking him to send the Archduke to Spain with ten or twelve thousand men, on the pretext that they were required for the defence of Catalonia.

But the gigantic armaments needed by Louis XIV. to face all Europe victoriously, as he had done, was exhausting the resources of France, and peace was in the air. The need also for French agents to have a good chance in Madrid to push the succession claim also made Louis pliant; and when the Peace of Ryswick was signed in October 1697, the world was surprised at the generous terms accorded by the victor to Spain. With every chance of success, then, Louis having restored the territory he had conquered, he could pose as the true friend of Spain, ready to champion the rights of his descendants by Maria Theresa, the eldest daughter of Philip, against the unpopular Germans, to succeed to the Spanish throne. There was much lost ground for the French to make up; for the German factions had been in sole possession ever since the death of Marie Louise in 1690; but the death of Mariana had left some of her friends in the market, and all classes of Spaniards were sick to death of Germans; so, as soon as the peace was signed, the Marquis d'Harcourt hurried to Madrid as French ambassador, primed with instructions, and

supplied with means to re-constitute the French party in Spain, and defeat, if possible, the machinations of Queen Marie Anne.

The first effect of the peace was to stop the project of bringing an Austrian army to Spain under the Archduke, and also the plan of the Elector of Bavaria to put in an appearance to counteract the Archduke's presence. The arrival of Harcourt at Madrid soon afterwards put a new complexion on affairs there. Stanhope writes, on the 14th March 1698, when the King had fallen again dangerously ill: 'Our Court is in great disorder: the grandees all dog and cat, Turk and Moor. The King is in a languishing condition, not in so imminent a danger as last week, but so weak and spent as to his principle of life, that all I can hear is pretended, amounts only to hopes of preserving him some weeks, without any probability of his recovery. The general inclination as to the succession is altogether French; their (*i.e.* the Spaniards') aversion to the Queen having set them against all her countrymen: and if the French King will content himself that one of his younger children be King of Spain, without pretending to incorporate the two monarchies, he will find no opposition, either from grandees or common people. . . . The King is so very weak he can scarcely lift his hand to his head to feed himself, and so extremely melancholy, that neither his buffoons, dwarfs, nor puppet-shows, all of which have shown their abilities before him, can in the least divert him from fancying everything that is said or done is a temptation of the devil, and never thinking himself safe but with his confessor and two friars by his side, whom he makes lie in his chamber every night.'[1]

[1] Stanhope Correspondence.—*Mahon.*

In such circumstances as these it was evident to the Queen's opponents that a bold move must be made at once or she would win. Her most powerful abettor with the King was the confessor, Father Matilla; the ostensible ministers, the Admiral of Castile,[1] Montalto and Oropesa, after many wrangles with her, agreeing to let her have a free hand with her husband, if they were allowed to take a fair share of the national plunder; the real government behind them being the Queen and her camarilla. The only man near the King who was inclined to favour the Bavarian heir was the lord chamberlain, Count Benavente, to whom one night, late in March 1698, Charles mumbled that he was very unhappy and uneasy in his conscience, and should like to see Cardinal Portocarrero.

The Cardinal Archbishop, who had been a close friend of Mariana's, and was a man of ability, had been carefully excluded from the King's chamber by Marie Anne. It was eleven o'clock at night, but swift secret messengers were soon at the Cardinal's door; and before midnight, unknown to the Queen, the primate stood by the King's bed. Charles opened all the troubles of his terror-stricken soul to the friend of his dead mother: how the violence of his wife and the harshness of the confessor, Matilla, frightened him into adopting a course which his conscience told him was wrong, and he prayed the primate to help him with advice in this dire strait. Portocarrero was nothing loath. Hurrying from the palace, he hastily convened a meeting of his friends. Count Monterey, the Marquis

[1] The Admiral of Castile, who was the Queen's most ostentatious champion, though she often quarrelled with him, was really betraying her all the time ('Recueil des Instructions').

of Leganés, Don Sebastian de Cotes, Don Francisco Ronquillo, the idol of the populace, and Don Juan Antonio Urraca.

What was to be done, and who should do it, before the Queen could banish them all? Monterey, in his stumbling speech, pointed out the danger of acting through the King at all, seeing that the Queen could twist him round her finger and make him alter any resolution he adopted, as she had done before. The best course, he said, would be for the Cardinal to frequent the King's chamber, ostensibly to give spiritual consolation, and then very gradually to prepare the King's mind for a change. Others thought that this process was too slow, since the King might slip through their hands after all, and Leganés advised that the Cardinal should immediately urge the King to order the arrest and imprisonment of the detested Admiral of Castile, the Duke of Rio Seco. 'His only escort,' said Leganés, 'were four knavish poets and a couple of buffoons,' whilst he, Leganés, had plenty of arms at home and two hundred soldiers in his pay, and could seize the most objectionable ministers at once. Then turbulent Ronquillo had his say. They must strike higher than the Admiral. The Queen as well must be seized as soon as her henchman was laid by the heels, and the Huelgas at Burgos should be her future place of confinement. Let us be practical, said Monterey, sneering at Ronquillo for a fool: if we offer violence to the Queen the excitement will kill the King before we can get a will or decree executed. We must act more cautiously than that. Then the two angry nobles clapped their hands to their swords, and were for fighting it out on the spot, until the Cardinal separated them, and wise old Cotes, with his

quiet voice, calmly gave his opinion. It would be easy for the Cardinal to obtain such a decree as that required, but the Queen would get it revoked the next morning more easily still, and then, what would happen to all of us? Let us, he said, strike at the trunk by all means, if possible, and get rid of the Queen: but how? Before that can be done we should put Matilla, the confessor, out of the way. The King hated and feared him already, and only yesterday refused to speak to him: let the Cardinal and Benavente advise the King to change his confessor, and the next step will be easy. This seemed good advice; but the jealous hidalgos then fell to quarrelling as to who the new confessor should be, with the result that the choice was ultimately left to the Cardinal.

The next morning Cotes suggested to his colleagues a certain modest professor of theology at Alcalá, one Father Froilan Diaz, for the post. He was near enough to the capital to be brought thither without delay, and would be humble enough to do as he was told: and so it was decided to secure the great appointment to Father Diaz. There was no lack of messengers to carry to him from the conspirators the news of his coming elevation, for each of them, especially Ronquillo, wished to gain the credit of proposing it; and the next day the astounded professor found himself already by anticipation a person to be courted by the greatest grandees in the land.

One day, early in the morning, in the first week in April, the sick King lay in bed listening dreamily to some music being played in the ante-chamber, the door between the rooms being open. Father Matilla and a crony of his, one Dr. Parra, were quietly chatting in one of the deep window recesses of the ante-

chamber; when suddenly Count Benavente entered unannounced, accompanied by a stout, fresh-coloured ecclesiastic; and, without saluting Matilla, they walked straight through into the King's bedroom, which Benavente alone was entitled to do, as lord chamberlain. Matilla was keen-witted, and saw at a glance what it meant. Turning to his friend, he said, 'Goodbye: this business is ending just as it ought to have begun;' and with that he hurried out of the palace and to the monastery of his order in Madrid.

Spies had already carried to Marie Anne and the Admiral reports of mysterious confabulations of their enemies, but they knew not where the blow was to fall. At eleven o'clock the King usually dined; and when Marie Anne, according to custom, entered the room that morning, to sit by his side whilst he ate, she learnt for the first time from the disjointed babble of the sick man, that he was free from Matilla, and had a new confessor.[1] Marie Anne was aghast at the news, though she made no sign of disapproval to her husband; but the moment she could leave the King's side, she summoned the Admiral and her other advisers, and considered the ill tidings. None knew who would be the next victim, and most of them thought that Matilla had betrayed them. Panic and bewilderment reigned amongst the chosen Camarilla. Some were for striving to reinstate Matilla, some for punishing him, others were for saving themselves by resignation and flight, but one great churchman, the head of the Franciscan order, Folch de Cardona, kept his head, and advised calmness. Matilla was exoner-

[1] The account here given is taken mainly from a contemporary MS., written by an officer of the Inquisition and an adherent of Portocarrero, in the British Museum, Add. 10,241: and from another account printed in Madrid, 1787.

ated and consulted; but when he learned that the Queen and the Admiral had known of Portocarrero's meeting before the blow fell, he broke down. 'Oh,' he cried, 'if I had only known one short half-hour before, I could have saved us all:' and then, though nominally pensioned and banished to Salamanca, he fell ill of grief, fever, or poison, and died within a week of his dismissal.

Diaz did not seem very terrible at first; for his methods with the King were soothing, and he moved slowly. He took Matilla's place on the Council of the Inquisition, and at once became a power in the land; but he was all politeness and gentle saintliness to Marie Anne, and even she, suspicious as she was, began to think that she might dominate still if she could confine Father Diaz to his spiritual functions. In the course of a few weeks after the change, the Court was moved to Toledo, but there the mob, who loved the Ronquillo brothers, and hated the Queen, knowing that she had suffered a defeat, made her feel that her power was on the wane. 'The Queen,' writes Stanhope, 'is very uneasy at the impudent railleries of the Toledo women, who affront her every day publicly in the streets, and insult the Admiral to his face. There is besides a great want of money; for the King's new confessor having persuaded him before he left Madrid to publish a decree forbidding the sale of all governments and offices, either in present or reversion, as a duty of conscience . . . the superintendent of the revenues declares that he is not able to find money for his Majesty's subsistence, all branches of the revenue being anticipated for many years, and he is now debarred from selling offices, which was the only resource he had left.'

In the meanwhile, the French ambassador, Harcourt, was busy buying friends at Court, though most of old Mariana's late adherents still preferred, as the King undoubtedly did, the Bavarian Prince. The people at large were strongly in favour of a French prince, descended from Maria Theresa, 'though they would rather have the devil,' as Stanhope says, 'than see France and Spain united. . . . It is scarce conceivable the abhorrence they have for Vienna; most of which is owing to the Queen's very imprudent conduct; insomuch that, in effect, that party is included in her own person and family. They have much kinder thoughts of the Bavarian, but still rather desire a French Prince to secure them against war.'

The intrigues of the French ambassador were met by increased activity on the part of the Queen, who left Charles no rest in pushing the claims of her nephew the Archduke. The poor King was sick of the whole business, and only wished to be left alone, and for his Bavarian nephew to succeed him. The King will not bear to hear talk of business of any kind, and when sometimes the Queen cannot contain herself, he bids her let him alone, and says she designs to kill him.'[1] A few weeks later (25th June) the English ambassador sent this vivid picture of the invalid: 'Our gazettes here tell us every week that his Catholic Majesty is in perfect health. . . . It is true that he is every day abroad, but *hæret lateri lethalis arundo;* his ankles and knees swell again, his eyes bag, the lids are as red as scarlet, and the rest of his face a greenish yellow. His tongue is "tied," as it is called, that is, he has such a fumbling in his speech, that those near him hardly understand him; at which

[1] 'Stanhope Correspondence,' *Mahon*, 11th June 1698.

he sometimes grows angry, and asks if they all be deaf.'

But, with all his feebleness, Charles still resisted the pressure upon him either to make a will or to summon the Archduke. Marie Anne was persistent; and at the end of June her importunity produced a dangerous fit that nearly ended the King's life there and then, after which Stanhope writes: 'There is not the least hope of this King's recovery; and we are every night in apprehensions of hearing he is dead in the morning, though the Queen lugs him out every day, to make the people believe he is well till her designs are rife, which I rather fear will prove abortive; for, by the best information I can get of the three pretenders, her candidate is like to have the fewest votes. Upon old Count Harrach's pressing the King to have the Archduke Charles sent for to Spain . . . he gave no answer, but turning to the Queen, who was present, said laughing, "Oyga mujer, el Conde aprieta mucho" (Hark, wife, how very pressing the Count is) repeating "very pressing" several times. The French Ambassador "presses" just as much, and the Nuncio, in the Pope's name, also for the French.'

These signs were not lost on Marie Anne, and she began to turn to the strongest side. Harcourt and his wife were charming and liberal, and had quite captivated the Madrid crowd, who cheered them wherever they went, whilst Harrach and his wife were unattractive and unpopular; but what was more important than anything else, now that Spanish resources were failing, French money was forthcoming to buy Baroness Berlips and the Queen's German hangers on. The Marquise of Harcourt paid assiduous court to Marie Anne, who, seeing the impossibility of her own

candidate, listened, beguiled, to the clever suggestion of the French that if she would abandon the Emperor's son, she might continue Queen of Spain by a marriage with the French prince who might succeed Charles.

For a time, in the late autumn of 1698, the French cause suffered a setback. Louis apparently considering that his chance of placing a French prince upon the throne of all the Spanish dominions in face of Europe would be impracticable, revived a scheme that he had agreed upon with the Emperor years before, when Charles was a child; namely, to partition Spain, by agreement with the maritime powers, between the three claimants: a French prince to take Naples, Sicily, and the Basque province, the Prince of Bavaria to reign in Spain itself, and Austria to be contented with Milan. This, when it was divulged, aroused the intensest indignation, not only in Spain, but in Austria and Bavaria. Harcourt and his wife lost their favour at once, and Marie Anne again leaned towards her German kinsmen. What was more important still, the King at last, under pressure which will be presently explained, made a testament declaring the Prince of Bavaria his heir. Marie Anne, the King himself, and the Council, all denied it; but it was soon known to be true, and the French ambassador immediately presented a demand that Cortes should be summoned to settle the succession by vote.

Suddenly, whilst this demand was being laboriously discussed, the news came that the little Bavarian prince, the only descendant of old Mariana except the King, had died, aged six—of poison it was said, in February 1699; and the problem of the succession was changed in a moment. Bribed and cajoled by hopes of remaining Queen of Spain by a second marriage, Marie Anne

again seemed inclined to side with those who had been her enemies. Most of the partisans of the Bavarian claimant, including the King himself, and especially Portocarrero, went over to the French view; and the principal reason why Marie Anne held herself in doubt was because she saw those whom she hated all ranged on the side of France.

Whilst this sordid bickering was going on in the palace the distress in the country increased daily, until famine invaded even the capital. The new confessor and Cardinal Portocarrero had, as yet, made no great change in the government; and Marie Anne's friends were still in office, headed by Oropesa and the Admiral. Ronquillo and his fellow-conspirators were growing impatient for their reward, and incited secretly by their agents, the populace of Madrid broke into revolt in April 1699. A howling mob surrounded the palace, crying for bread. 'Long live the King, and death to Oropesa,' was the cry. Inside the palace panic reigned supreme, and poor Charles was like to die with fright, when the rabble demanded fiercely that he should show himself upon the balcony. Marie Anne appeared at the open window undaunted, and told the crowd that the King was asleep. 'He has slept too long,' was the reply, 'wake him'; and at last the King had to appear, looking, as Stanhope says, like a ghost, and moving as if by clock work. Ronquillo! Ronquillo! shouted the mob. We will have Ronquillo for mayor: and in a hurry Ronquillo was sent for and sworn in as mayor, which somewhat appeased the insurgents, who bore him off in triumph. Oropesa's palace was ablaze, and a rush upon it by the mob had resulted in many of the latter being killed, and cast into a well within the precincts by Oropesa's servants. Further enraged at

this, the populace surged *en masse* to the King's palace, clamouring for the heads of Oropesa and the Admiral; and they were with difficulty restrained from invading the royal apartments by the clergy, with raised crucifixes and holy symbols. Again they demanded the presence of the King, who told them that Ronquillo had orders to do everything to satisfy them, and promised, on his oath as a King, that the insurgents should be held harmless for the tumult.

A clean sweep was made of Marie Anne's friends. The Admiral fled to hiding; and Portocarrero declared that within a week or two he would have Berlips, the Capuchin confessor of the Queen, and the whole gang cleared out of Spain. The day after the tumult Stanhope wrote: 'The King is very weak, and declines fast. The tumult yesterday, I fear, may have some ill-effect further on his health. It was such as the like never before happened in Madrid in the memory of the oldest men here, and proves, contrary to what they brag of, that there is a mob here as well as in other places.' The whole aspect of the palace changed as if by magic, and Cardinal Portocarrero was supreme. Marie Anne, cowed by the violence and vituperation of the mob, was glad to lie low, and did not attempt to influence the King, whose health declined every day.

Since the death of the Bavarian claimant in February the matter of the succession had remained in abeyance; and it was evident now that unless the King was indeed very soon to declare his heir by testament he would die with the question still open. But poor Charles shrunk from the execution of an act, which he had always said he would only do in *articulo mortis*, and the persuasions of those about him were always met by a fresh plea for delay. In this deadlock of

affairs a course was adopted by the dominant party which will always furnish one of the most repulsive episodes of history. During his first grave attack at the end of 1697, Charles, who was as superstitious as he was ignorant, sent for Rocaberti, the Inquistor-General, a stern Dominican, and confessed that he believed his illness to be the result of a maleficent charm cast upon him. The Inquisitor replied that he would have the case examined; but he saw no probability of result unless the King would point out some person whom he suspected, or gave some evidence to proceed upon.

There the matter remained until Froilan Diaz was substituted, as has been related, for Matilla as the King's confessor. Probably as part of a concerted plan to obtain complete control over him, Diaz appeared to agree with Charles in his expressed belief that he was bewitched; and, having heard that an old friend of his in a convent in Galicia, had by many efficacious exorcisms become quite familiar with the evil spirits that he cast out, he consulted the Inquisitor-General Rocaberti, as to whether it would be well to summon the priestly exorciser to the King. The Inquisitor did not like the business, but consented to a letter being written to the Bishop of Oviedo, the exorciser's spiritual superior, asking him to submit to the latter the question as to the truth of the statement that the King was suffering from diabolical arts. The bishop, determined not to be made the channel of such nonsense, replied that the only witchcraft the King was suffering from was weakness of constitution and a too ready acquiescence in his wife's will; and he refused to have anything to do with it. Diaz then sent direct to Argüelles the exorcisor in July 1698, instructing

him to lay upon his breast a paper with the names of the King and Queen written upon it, and summon the devil to ask if the persons whose names were written were bewitched.

Thenceforward for eight or nine months the ghastly mockery went on.[1] The devil announced that the King was bewitched: 'et hoc ad destruendam materiam generationis in Rege, et eum incapacem ponendum ad regnum administrandum'; the charm having heen administered by moonlight when the King was fourteen years old. Repulsive remedies were prescribed which, if administered, would certainly have killed the patient, others were recommended just as hideous but less harmful; and the poor creature was submitted to them. At length, after the will in favour of the Bavarian had been wrung from the King by many months of this ghastly nonsense, it was seen that the exorciser was aiming at gaining influence for himself. He said that the charms had been administered by the King's mother, and repeated much dangerous political advice that the devil had given, such as to recommend the complete isolation of the King from his wife, and other things less palatable to Portocarrero and the French party; and the exorciser, being able to get no further, was dropped in June 1699.

This was the time when the King was suffering from the shock of the recent tumults, and Stanhope writes: 'His Catholic Majesty grows every day sensibly worse and worse. It is true that last Thursday they made him walk in the public solemn procession of Corpus, which was much shortened for his sake.

[1] Every detail of the correspondence will be found in the MSS. already referred to, and, in English, in 'The Exorcism of Charles the Bewitched,' in 'The Year after the Armada,' etc., by the present writer.

However, he performed it so feebly that all who saw him said he could not make one straight step, but staggered all the way; nor could it be otherwise expected after he had had two falls a day or two before, walking in his own lodgings, when his legs doubled under him by mere weakness. In one of them he hurt his eye, which appeared much swelled, and black and blue; the other being quite sunk into his head, the nerves being contracted by his paralytic distemper. Yet it was thought fit to have him make this sad figure in public, only to have it put into the Gazette how strong and vigorous he is.'

At this juncture Marie Anne's suspicions were first aroused of the witchcraft business by a hint dropped by the King, and she at once set spies upon those who had access to him, and especially upon Diaz the confessor. A very few days convinced her that the ghastly incantations that were being carried on were directed against her, politically and personally. 'Roaring with very rage,' she summoned her friends and demanded instant revenge and punishment of the King's confessor.[1] She was reminded by Folch de Cardona, that as the Inquisitor-General was concerned in the matter, it would be prudent to go cautiously until it was seen how far the Holy Office itself was a party: and, in any case, he said it would be wisest to allow the Inquisition to avenge her rather than for her to do it and thereby make herself more unpopular than she was. It was soon found that the Sacred Tribunal was not concerned; but as Rocaberti, the dreaded chief Inquisitor, had been active in the matter, no one dared to move against Diaz or him, for Inquisitors

[1] MSS. account already referred to. British Museum MSS., Add. 10,241.

were dangerous people to touch. Almost immediately afterwards Rocaberti died suddenly, almost certainly poisoned; and then Marie Anne laid her plans to crush Father Diaz the confessor.

Stanhope writes (15th July): 'The doctors, not knowing what more to do with the King, to save their credit have bethought themselves to say his ill must certainly be witchcraft, and there is a great Court party who greedily catch at and improve the report, which, how ridiculous soever it may sound in England, is generally believed here, and propagated by others to serve a turn. They, finding all their attempts in vain to banish Madame Berlips, think this cannot fail, and are using to find out any colourable pretences to make her the witch.' It was higher game even than Berlips that they were aiming at. Berlips stood behind the Queen, and one could not be injured without the other.

In September a mad woman, in a state of frenzy, burst into the King's presence, foaming at the mouth, and cursed him with demoniac shrieks until she was removed by force, leaving Charles in an agony of terror which nearly killed him. The mad woman was followed, and it was found that she lived with two other demoniacs who were under the impression that they were keeping the King subject in their room. This nonsense was conveyed to the King by Diaz, and confirmed the invalid in his conviction that he was under the influence of sorcery. In this belief he ordered that the three women should be exorcised by a famous German monk, who had been brought to Spain as an able exorciser for the King's benefit. Diaz, who superintended the incantations, unfortunately for himself, dictated questions to the demoniacs which

were evidently designed to involve the Queen. Who was it that caused the King's malady? A beautiful woman, was the answer. Was it the Queen? and to this no distinct reply was given. But the question was enough; and when Marie Anne received a full report of the proceedings, as she did from her spies, she was, of course, furious that an open attempt should be made to cast upon her the blame of the witchcraft.

The first step towards her revenge was to get a new Inquisitor-General in her interest, and she pressed the King to appoint Folch de Cardona, General of the Franciscans. He refused, prompted no doubt by his confessor, and, in spite of Marie Anne's passionate outbursts of protest, he appointed Cardinal Cordova; to whom the King and the confessor unburdened themselves completely, and told the whole story of the exorcism. From these conferences an extraordinary resolution resulted. The Queen herself was too high to strike at first; but her great friend and late all-powerful minister, the Admiral of Castile, was detested and despised by every one, and might be attacked with impunity to begin with. So it was decided that he, being allied with the devil to cause all the mischief, should be seized by the Inquisition of Granada and closely imprisoned, whilst his household should be incarcerated elsewhere, and his papers seized by the holy office. This could not be done, however, until the new Inquisitor-General's appointment was ratified by the Pope. Once more Marie Anne and her friends trumped their opponents' strong suit, for Cardinal Cordova died of poison on the very day that the bull arrived.

Again Marie Anne pressed her husband to appoint one of her tools Inquisitor-General; but Father Diaz

was now fighting for his life, and prevented the appointment. Marie Anne then sought out a man who would be acceptable to her opponents, but whom she might buy, and Mendoza, Bishop of Segovia, became Inquisitor-General, bribed by the Queen with the promise of a cardinal's hat to do her bidding in future. Marie Anne had the whip hand and promptly used it. Stanhope wrote on the 22nd August: 'As to Court factions, her Majesty is now as high as ever, and the Cardinal of Toledo, who carried everything before him two months ago, now dares hardly to open his mouth. But he is sullen, comes seldom to Court, and talks of retiring to Toledo.' First the German exorciser was captured, and under torture confessed the details of the exorcism of the three demoniacs when Diaz was present; then the compromising correspondence with the exorciser in Galicia was seized, with all the hints and suggestions made in it to incriminate the Queen. This was sufficient evidence against Diaz, and he was arrested. Everything he had done, he said, was by the King's orders; and as royal confessor he claimed immunity, his mouth being closed. He was at once dismissed from all his offices, and the King was appealed to by the Inquisitor-General to allow the confessor's privileges to be dispensed with. Charles could only mumble that they might do justice; but Diaz had a powerful party behind him who took care to spread abroad the story of the Queen's vengeance, and Diaz, aided by many of his late colleagues on the Council of the Inquisition, fled to the coast, and so to Rome. There he was seized and brought back to Spain; and thenceforward, for many years, there raged around him a great and unparalleled contest between the Council of the Inqui-

sition, which favoured Diaz, and the Inquisitor-General in the interests of the Queen's vengeance.[1]

Marie Anne had won, so far as the King's confessor was concerned, but her unpopularity was so great that she gained no ground politically; nor did her German candidate for the succession improve in his chance of success, for Cardinal Portocarrero and his friends filled all the administrative offices, and Marie Anne was powerless. Stanhope wrote in September 1699: 'One night last week a troop of about three hundred, with swords, bucklers and firearms, went into the outward court of the palace and, under the King's window, sung most impudent lampoons and pasquins; and the Queen does not appear in the streets without hearing herself cursed to her face. . . . The pasquins plainly tell her they will pull her out of the palace and put her in a convent, adding that their party is no less than 14,000 strong. This new turn has damped the discourse, which was very hot lately, of the Admiral's return to Court, and the Cardinal of Toledo is now like to be the great man again."[2]

Every day some fresh sign was given that Marie Anne's foes were paramount. 'Our great German lady, the Countess of Berlips, is going, nor does she go alone; but all the rest of the German tribe are to accompany her, namely, a fine young lady, her niece, a German woman, a dwarf, an eunuch, the Queen's German doctor, the Capuchin, her confessor, and Father Carapacci . . . who, though no German, yet is one of the Queen's chief agents, and as great an eyesore to the people as any of them. This seems a

[1] This struggle, which cannot be described here, is fully narrated in 'The Exorcism of Charles the Bewitched' ('Year After the Armada'), by Martin Hume.

[2] Stanhope Correspondence.—*Mahon.*

great reform, but I believe will prove no amendment, for I expect to see others as greedy, if not more so, to take their places.'[1]

The French party was now absolutely paramount; for the money and diplomatic skill of Louis XIV. had been lavishly employed in gaining friends from those who had been in favour of the Bavarian prince; and Marie Anne herself, though she had now the Inquisitor-General on her side, could hardly get a word alone with her dying husband. Charles lingered on in morbid melancholy for many months longer. Like his father, in similar case, he found the royal charnel-house at the Escorial a resort that suited his humour. On one occasion it is related that, with Marie Anne at his side, he caused the coffins of his relatives to be opened and the bodies exposed to view. He was deeply affected by the sight of the corpse that had once been the beautiful Marie Louise, the wife of his youth, whose dead face he caressed, with tears and promises to join her soon, whilst Marie Anne, as a reply to the King's affection for his dead French wife, kissed the crumbling hand of old German Mariana, whose enemy she had been on earth.

Whilst the Spanish Court and so-called government were thus employed in degrading superstitions and petty squabbles, the fate of the nation, reduced now to utter impotence, was being discussed and settled by foreign powers. Louis XIV., still desirous, if possible of securing for France without war the portion of Spain's inheritance which mainly interested him, made early in 1700, another treaty with England and Holland for the partition of Spain between the claimants and others interested, threatening that if the Emperor

[1] Stanhope Correspondence.—*Mahon.*

refused to accept the terms offered the invasion of Spain by France would follow, and the whole inheritance claimed for the Dauphin at the sword's point. The Emperor indignantly rejected the advance, and also claimed to be sole heir: the Spaniards, and even their moribund King, blazing out in anger with some of their old pride at this unceremonious dismemberment of their ancient realm. Stanhope's expulsion from Spain followed quickly upon this new attempt at partition, and for a short time the French cause looked black. Then the Austrians, to make their assurance doubly sure, endeavoured to secure Marie Anne firmly to their side by the same means as those that Harcourt had employed to win her for the French faction. They promised that if she aided them the Archduke, her nephew, when he became King of Spain should marry her. The Queen was delighted; and in order to deal one more blow at the French claim, went to her husband and divulged to him, not the Austrian but the former French offer of marriage. Charles was tired of life and utterly muddled with the atmosphere of intrigue in which he lived; but even he protested in impotent passion against his wife being wooed before he was dead, and this increased his dislike of the French claimant, though Louis XIV. recalled Harcourt and disclaimed the offer he had made.

But Cardinal Portocarrero was always by the King's side, and exercised more influence over him than any one else. He, in his sacred character, warned Charles that it was his duty to his conscience to lay aside personal partialities, and to summon a conference of the most famous theologians and jurisconsults to discuss and decide the question of the succession. Portocarrero took care that such conferences should

result in a vote in favour of Louis XIV.'s young grandson, Philip Duke of Anjou, measures being taken to prevent any future joining of the two realms under one crown. Charles was hard to convince, for he clung to the Empire both by tradition and at the pleading of his wife; and Portocarrero then told him that it was his duty to submit his doubts to the Pope. Charles was devout, and did so. Innocent XI. had all along been an enemy of Austria and a friend of France; and, as Portocarrero of course anticipated, decided in favour of the Duke of Anjou as the legitimate heir.[1]

But still Charles hesitated. Marie Anne was indefatigable in persuading him to favour the Austrian, and always managed to prevent the fateful will being made in Anjou's favour; distracting her dying husband, even at this pass, with the vain shows, bull fights, tourneys, and the like, which had been for so long the traditional pleasures of his Court. She even endeavoured to make terms with her enemies again, in order to be safe in any eventuality; but Louis XIV. began to speak more haughtily now; threatening war if a single German soldier set foot in Spain or resistance was offered to the partition. There was nothing that Charles and his people dreaded more than the dismemberment of the country, and this frightened the King into looking upon the acceptance of the French claim as the only means of keeping Spain intact. Thus, from day to day, the irresolute monarch turned to one side or another, as his wife or Portocarrero, his fears or his affections, gained the upper hand.

On the 20th September he took to his bed to rise

[1] There is no doubt whatever that the French claim through Maria Theresa and Anna of Austria, Queens of France, was the legitimate one, and that the Emperor had no valid right by Spanish law.

no more, and a few days afterwards received the last sacrament, asking for pardon of all whom he had unconsciously offended. The sick chamber assumed the appearance of a mingled charnel house and toy-shop, as the pale figure of the King upon his great bed grew more ghastly and hopeless. All the sacred relics in the capital were crowded into the room; carved saints, blessed rosaries and mouldering human remains, until, to make space for fresh comers, the less renowned objects had to be removed. The Primate of Spain, Portocarrero, made the most of the priestly privilege; and, in the interests of the dying King's religious consolation, he kept from his side Marie Anne and her allies, the Inquisitor-General and the King's regular confessor. Alone with the King, the Cardinal admonished him that in order to avoid dying in a state of sin, it was necessary for him to avert war from the country by making a will, leaving his crown to the Duke of Anjou, putting aside all personal leanings and family ties.

Charles could resist no longer. He was in terror; the spectre of sin and devilish temptations always before him, and summoning the Secretary of State, Ubilla, he himself directed him to draft a will in favour of his young French great-nephew, the Duke of Anjou. On the 3rd October 1700, the document was placed before him. Around his bed stood Cardinals Portocarrero and Borgia, and the highest officers of the household; but Marie Anne of Neuburg was not there to see the final shattering of her hopes. With trembling hand Charles the Bewitched took the pen. 'God alone gives kingdoms,' he sighed, 'for to Him all kingdoms belong.' Then signing in his great uncultured writing; 'I, the King,' he dropped the pen, saying, 'I am nothing now:' and thus the die was

cast, the house of Austria gave place to the house of Bourbon. Marie Anne did not even yet accept defeat meekly. In an interval of partial improvement in the King's health, she returned to the attack, and with tears and protestations, induced the King to think well again of his Austrian kinsmen. A courier was sent hurrying to Vienna to tell the Emperor, that, after all, the last will would make his son the heir of Spain, and a codicil was signed conferring upon Marie Anne the governorship of any city in Spain or Spanish State in Italy or Flanders in which she might choose to reside after her husband's death.

Soon afterwards (26th October) a decree was signed by Charles, who seemed then to be dying, appointing a provisional government, headed by Marie Anne, with Portocarrero and other great officers, to rule, pending the arrival of the new King; whilst Portocarrero was nominated to act as Regent if the King, though still alive, might be unable to exercise his functions. With all the terror-stricken devotion that had been traditional in his house, the last few days on earth of Charles the Bewitched were passed, and on the 1st November 1700, the last descendant in the male line of the great Emperor Charles V., died of senile old age before he was forty, the victim of four generations of incest; leaving as his legacy to the world a great war which changed the face of Europe, and decided the future course of civilisation.

The terms of the will had been kept a close secret; and as soon as the King's death was known, the Palace of Madrid was packed with an eager crowd of nobles and magnates to learn the name of their future king. The will was read solemnly in the presence of Marie Anne and the principal great officers; and soon

the news was spread that Spain was free from the house of Austria, which had been the cause of its greatness and its ruin. Marie Anne, at the head of the Council of Regency, had but a short term of power, and, as may be supposed, considering her imperious nature, a far from harmonious one. Louis XIV., however, lost no time; and the bright handsome lad, full of hope and spirit, thenceforward Philip V. of Spain, hurried south to take possession of his inheritance almost before the Emperor had time to protest.

On the 18th February 1701, Philip arrived in Madrid; and his first act was to confirm Portocarrero as his leading minister. Marie Anne had quarrelled with her colleagues before this, and they had complained of her to the young King before his arrival. She had been defeated indeed; for she saw now that the marriage bait that had been held out to her was illusory; and when the order came to her from the new King to leave Madrid before he entered it, she went, full of plans for revenge still, to her place of banishment at Toledo; yet with kindly professions upon her lips, for the large pension of 400,000 ducats settled upon her by Charles, was too valuable to be jeopardised by open opposition to the ruling powers. She was all smiles when young Philip visited her at Toledo soon after his arrival; and she hung around his neck a splendidly jewelled badge of the Golden Fleece as a token of her recognition of his sovereignty. But when the war broke out, and the Archduke, her nephew, with his allies came to fight for the prize he claimed, Marie Anne could hardly be expected to stand quite aloof. In 1706, the victorious Austrian and his allies were carried by the fortune of war into Toledo; and Marie Anne welcomed her nephew with

effusive joy as King of Spain; but when the turn of the tide carried Philip v. into power again, a few months later, two hundred horsemen, under the Duke of Osuna, clattered into the courtyard of Marie Anne's convent retreat at Toledo, and arrested the Queen, carrying her thence as rapidly as horses could travel over the frontier to France.

At Bayonne, Marie Anne lived in retirement for nine years, when a strange revolution of fortune's wheel brought her back to Spain again triumphant. In the stately Morisco Palace at Guadalajara, Marie Anne passed in affluent dignity the last twenty-six years of life in widowhood, and died in 1740. She lived to see Spain rise from its ashes, a new nation, purged by the fires of war; purified by heroism and sacrifice. The long duel between the Empire and France for the possession of the resources of Spain had ended before the death of Marie Anne in the successful reassertion of Spain to the possession of her own resources. Rulers, men and women, had blindly and ignorantly done their worst; pride, bigotry, and sloth had dominated for centuries the spirit of the nation, as a result of the action which alone had caused Spain to bulk so big in the eyes of the world, and then to sink so low. But at last the evil nightmare of the house of Austria was shaken off, and when the aged widow of Charles II. passed to her rest at Guadalajara, Spaniards were awakening to the stirring message, that Spain might be happier and more truly great in national concentration than when the men-at-arms of the Austrian Philips squandered blood and treasure beyond count, to uphold in foreign lands an impossible pretension, born of ambitions as dead as those who first conceived them.

EPILOGUE

EPILOGUE

FIRE and sword swept Spain clean. The long drawn war of succession broke down much of the old exclusiveness and conceit which had been for two centuries the bane of the Spanish people, and a new patriotic spirit was aroused which proved that the nation was not effete but only drugged. The accession of Philip v. had been looked upon by his grandfather as practically annexing Spain to France. '*Il n'y a plus de Pyrénées*,' he announced; and his first act proved his determination of treating his grandson's realm as a vassal state of his own. Again it was to a large extent the influence of women which directed the course of Spanish politics, even to the confusion of the *roi soleil*. It has been shown in this history how often feminine influence had been invoked by statesmen to bring Spain to a sympathetic line of policy for their own ends, and how often circumstances had rendered their efforts ineffectual.

The confident anticipations of Louis XIV. that, by rightly choosing his feminine instruments he might use Spain entirely for the aggrandisement of France, were even more conspicuously defeated than any previous attempts had been in a similar direction; for the ladies upon whom he depended were one after the other caught up by the chivalrous patriotism of the Spanish people, newly aroused from the bad dream of a hundred years, and boldly braving Louis, they did

their best for Spain and for their own ends, whether France benefited or not.

The bride that Louis chose for his grandson was one from whom no resistance could be expected. She was a mere child, under fifteen, Maria Louisa Gabriela of Savoy, daughter of Victor Amadeus and Anne Marie of Orleans, sister of that Marie Louise, Queen of Spain, whose life has been told in detail in these pages. In September 1701 young Philip went to meet his bride at Barcelona; and even thus early it was seen that he had to face a coalition of all Europe against him. Revolt had been stirred up in Naples; and Philip had hardly time to snatch a brief honeymoon before he was obliged to hurry away to Italy to fight for his crown; leaving the girl whom he had married to rule Spain in his absence and to marshal the elements of defence in a country utterly prostrate and disorganised. Maria Louisa was, of course, entirely inexperienced, but she came of a stout race and never flinched from the responsibilities cast upon her. The young married couple were already deeply in love with each other; and Philip, though only seventeen, had thus early begun to show the strange uxoriousness that in later life became an obsession which made him a mere appanage of the woman by his side; so that Maria Louisa began her strenuous life assured that she would meet with no captious opposition from her husband.

Louis XIV. and Mme. de Maintenon had placed by her side a far stronger personality than Philip; one of the greatest women of her century, whose mission it was to keep the young King and Queen of Spain in the narrow path of French interests. Anne Marie de la Tremouille, Duchess of Bracciano, whom the

Spaniards called the Princess of Ursinos, took charge of the young Queen at once when the Piedmontese household was dismissed at the frontier; and through the most troublous period of the great struggle which finally gave the throne to Philip, she ruled the rulers gently, wisely and firmly for their own interests and those of Spain. No cantankerous straitlaced Mistress of the Robes was she, such as the Duchess of Terranova who had embittered the life of the other Marie Louise, but a great lady full of wit and knowledge, and as brave as a lioness in defence of the best interests of those in her charge.

The young Queen herself, when she had been installed in the capital as Regent, showed how changed were the circumstances of a Queen of Spain, now that the dull gloom of the house of Austria had been swept away, and a new Spain was gazing towards the dawn. Nothing could exceed the diligence and ability of this girl of fifteen in administering the government of Madrid in the absence of the new King. Instead of the dull round of devotion and frivolity which had filled the lives of other Queen Consorts, she, with the wise old Princess at her side, worked incessantly. She would sign nothing she did not understand: she insisted upon all complaints being investigated, and reports made direct to her. Supplies of men and money for the war in which Philip was already plunged in Italy, were collected and remitted with an activity and regularity which filled old-fashioned Spaniards with surprise, and encouraged those who possessed means to contribute from their hoards resources previously unsuspected. The manners of the Court were reformed; immorality and vice, so long rampant in Madrid, was frowned at and discouraged; and, instead

of allowing the news of the wars in which the King was engaged to filter slowly and incorrectly from the palace to the gossips of the street, the Queen herself read aloud from a balcony to the people below the despatches she daily received from her husband.

All this was enough to make the old Queen Consorts of Spain turn with horror in their porphyry urns at the Escorial; but it came like a breeze of pure mountain air into the miasmatic apathy which had hitherto cloaked the capital; and all Spain plucked up heart and spirit from the energy of this girl of fifteen, with the wise old Frenchwoman behind her. But even they could only administer things as they found them, and the root of the governmental system itself was vicious. Time, and above all knowledge, was required to re-organise the country; and Spaniards grew restive at the foreign auspices under which the reforms were introduced. Maria Louisa and her husband well knew that without French support liberally given, they could never hold their own: for when the King returned to Madrid early in 1703, the Spaniards, who had belonged to the Austrian party in the last reign, had thrown off the mask and fled to join the enemy: and it was clear that no Spaniards would fight to make Spain a dependency of France.

Nothing less than this would satisfy Louis XIV.; and the Princess of Ursinos, who had tried to make the struggle a patriotic one for Spaniards, was warned from Paris that, unless she immediately retired from the country, King Louis would abandon Spain and his grandson to their fate. The Princess went into exile with a heavy heart, and the new French ambassador, Grammont, came when she had departed in 1704, instructed to make a clean sweep of all the

national party in Madrid, and to obtain control for the French ministers. But Louis XIV. had underrated the power and ability of Maria Louisa, who resented the contemptuous dismissal of her wise mentor, and took no pains to conceal her opposition to the change. Louis sent scolding letters to her, rating her for her presumption in wishing, 'at the age of eighteen to govern a vast disorganised monarchy,' against the advice of those so much more experienced than herself. But at last he had to recognise that this girl, with the best part of Spain behind her, held the stronger position; and he took the wise course of conciliating her by re-enlisting and restoring to Spain the offended Princess of Ursinos. In vain his representatives in Madrid assured him that neither the Princess nor the Queen could be trusted to serve French interests blindly. The two women were too clever and too firm to be ignored, and the Princess returned to Madrid in triumph in August 1705, with *carte blanche* from Louis to do as she judged best to save Spain for the house of Bourbon, at all events.

Thenceforward the Mistress of the Robes governed the Queen, the Queen governed the King, and the King was supposed to govern the country; plunged in war at home and abroad, with the Spanish nobles either on the side of the Austrian or sullen at the foreign influence which pervaded the government measures, even when moderated and held in check by the Princess of Ursinos. At length, when the long war was wearing itself out, and peace was in the air, the stout-hearted little Savoyarde fell sick. She had borne many children to her husband, but only two sons, so far, had lived, Louis, born in 1707, and Ferdinand, born late in 1713. The birth of the

latter heralded his mother's death. She had not spared herself in all the strenuous thirteen years of war and tumult, during which she had to a great extent governed Spain; for Philip, when not absent in the field, was an obedient husband; and now, at the dawn of a period of peace at the beginning of 1714, Maria Louisa died at the age of twenty-six.

Philip was still a young man; but the dependence upon his wife, and his long fits of apathy that afterwards led to lunacy, had made him unfit to fulfil the duties of his position without a clever helpmeet by his side. The first result of the death of Maria Louisa was enormously to increase the influence of the old Princess of Ursinos. She was the only person allowed to see the King in his heartbroken grief; and whilst he was in seclusion in the Medina Celi palace, the monks were turned out of a neighbouring monastery that the Princess might stay there and have free access to the King through a passage made for the purpose through the walls that separated the buildings. The gossips very soon began to say that the King was going to marry the Princess, though she was old enough to be his grandmother. But, as usual, the scandalmongers were wrong. The Princess of Ursinos was far too clever for such a stroke as that; but she and others saw that Philip must marry some one without loss of time, or he would lose what wits were left to him.

The marriage-mongers of Europe were on the alert, but the problem to be solved was not an easy one. A bride must be found whom Louis XIV. would accept, and yet one not too subservient to orders from France, nor one who would interfere with the absolute paramountcy of the Princess of Ursinos. So all the sug-



ISABEL FARNESE.

After a Painting by Van Loo.

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gestions coming from France were regarded coldly; and the Princess set about finding a candidate who would suit her. There was an Italian priest in Spain at the time, one Father Alberoni, a cunning rogue, who could be a buffoon when it suited him, who had wormed himself into Court circles in the suite of the Duke of Vendôme. This man, a Parmese, came to the Princess of Ursinos the day after Queen Maria Louisa Gabriela died and suggested that there was a modest, submissive little princess at Parma, the niece and stepdaughter of the reigning prince, who had no male heirs, and that this girl was exactly fitted to be the new consort to Philip v. The Princess of Ursinos was inclined to regard the idea favourably, for not only was it evident that so young and humble a princess would not attempt to interfere with her, but the match seemed to offer a chance for re-establishing the lost influence of Spain in Italy. Louis xiv. had other views for his grandson, and did not take kindly to the proposal, but he was grudgingly won over by the Princess of Ursinos, whom he could not afford to offend. Philip himself was as wax in the hands of the old Princess; and on the 16th September 1714 he married by proxy Isabel Farnese, Princess of Parma.

Isabel Farnese had been represented by Alberoni as a tractable young maiden, but she was a niece, by her mother, of the Queen Dowager, Marie Anne of Neuburg, who was eating her heart out in spite in her exile at Bayonne; and Alberoni knew full well when he suggested the Parmese bride that he was taking part in a deep-laid conspiracy to overthrow the Princess of Ursinos. His part was a difficult one to play at first, for he had to keep up an appearance of

adhesion to the Princess of Ursinos whilst currying favour with the coming Queen. Isabel Farnese approached her new realm with the airs of a conqueror. She was to have landed at Alicante, and thither went Alberoni and her Spanish household to receive her: but she altered her mind suddenly, and decided to go overland through the south of France and visit her aunt Marie Anne at Bayonne. Marie Anne had a long score of her own to settle with the Princess of Ursinos, who had kept her in exile, and she instructed her niece how to proceed to make herself mistress of her husband's realm.

Isabel Farnese, girl though she was, did not need much instruction in imperious self-assertion, and began her operations as soon as she crossed the frontier. She flatly refused to dismiss her Italian suite, as had been arranged in accordance with the invariable Spanish rule, and showed from the first that she meant to have her own way in all things. She was in no hurry, moreover, to meet her husband until the Princess of Ursinos was out of the way; and when the latter, in great state, came to meet her at Jadraque, a short distance from Guadalajara, where the King was awaiting his bride, Isabel was ready for the decisive fray which should settle the question as to who should rule Spain.

The old Princess was quite aware also by this time that she had to meet a rival, and she began when she entered the presence by making some remark about the slowness of the Queen's journey. Hardly were the words out of her mouth than the young termagant shouted: 'Take this old fool away who dares to come and insult me:' and then, in spite of protest and appeal, the Princess was hustled into a coach to be

driven into exile through a snowstorm in the winter night over the bleakest uplands in Europe, Attired in her Court dress, with no change of garments or adequate protection against the weather, without respect, consideration or decency, the aged Princess was thus expelled from the country she had served so wisely. She saw now, as she had feared for some time before, that she had been tricked by the crafty Italian clown-cleric, and that her day was done.

The dominion of the new Queen Isabel Farnese over the spirit of Philip v. was soon more complete even than that of the Princess had been, and a letter of cold compliment from the King was all the reward or consolation that the Princess got for her protracted service to him and his cause in Spain; services without which, in all human probability, he would never have retained the crown. So long as Philip had a masterful woman always by his side to keep him in leading strings, it mattered little to him who the woman was; and Isabel Farnese, bold, ambitious, and intriguing, ruled Spain in the name of her husband thenceforward for thirty years. Her system was neither French nor Spanish, but founded upon the feline ecclesiastical methods of the smaller Italian Courts: and the object of Isabel's life was to assert successfully the rights of her sons to the Italian principalities she claimed in virtue of her descent. The pretext under which she cloaked her aims was the recovery of the Spanish influence in the sister Peninsula: but the wars which resulted were in no sense of Spanish national concern, but purely Italian and dynastic.

Thus, for many years to come, the progress of Spain was retarded, and her resources wasted in struggles by land and sea all over Europe, and with allies and

opponents constantly changing, with the end of seating Isabel's Bourbon sons upon Italian thrones. She succeeded, at the cost of a generation of war, and gave to Spain once more an appearance of some of her old potency, thanks to new ideas and more enlightened administration: but when the successive deaths of her two stepsons, the heirs of Philip by his first Savoyard wife, made her own eldest son Charles King of Spain, Isabel was plainly, but delicately, made to understand that the destinies of the country must in future be guided by men, and in enlightened national interests, and not by women for secondary ends.

Again, on the death of Charles III., the only strong King since Philip II., the regal mantle fell upon a weak uxorious man, whose wife, yet another Maria Louisa, led Spain by the miry path of disgraceful favouritism to the great war of Independence—the Peninsular war—which destroyed what was left of old Spain, and held up to the derision of the world the reigning family, of whom Napoleon made such cruel sport.

Forty years more of feminine rule in the next generation brought the unfortunate country to the revolution of 1868, and then the dawning came of a happier day, now brightening to its full. Only half a century ago the old, old struggle between France and Germany to provide a Consort for Spain was engaged anew, and brought England and France upon the very verge of war. But the fall of the Bourbons in France and Italy, and the disappearance of the French monarchy, as a result of the great war between the Frank and Teuton, still, on the ancient pretext of their rival interests in Spain, banished, at least for our time, the dynastic jealousy which had kept Europe at war for centuries.

An Austrian Queen Regent has since then ruled Spain with consummate wisdom and the noblest self-sacrifice for nearly twenty years; and France has watched with sympathy, and no thought of aggression, the sustained effort of a good woman to hand down intact to her fatherless son the inheritance to which he was born. An English Queen Consort sits by the side of the Spanish King, now, for the first time for centuries, and yet no breath of discord comes from other nations to mar the love match that has ended in a happy marriage.

The world grows wiser at last. The old tradition that dynastic connection could override irresistible national tendencies has lingered long, but is really dying now. Matrimonial alliances between reigning families are symptoms, not causes, and as the personal power of the monarch wanes before the growth of popular government, the influence of the consort becomes more social, and consequently more personally interesting.

The stories told in these pages treat of a state of affairs never likely to recur. They show, amongst other things, with what little prescience the world has been governed. The attempt of Ferdinand the Catholic to make Aragon great by marriage ended in the swamping of Aragon: the attempt of Charles v. and his son to dictate the religion of the world, by means of the strength gained by matrimonial alliances, ended in the exhaustion and ruin of Spain: the attempts of France and Germany to obtain control of Spain by providing consorts for the ruling kings has ended in neither obtaining what it sought, and in Spain being as safe from foreign domination of any sort as any country in Europe. The lesson to

be drawn surely is that rulers, grandly as they bulk for their little day in the eyes of men, are themselves but puppets, moved by aggregate spontaneous national forces infiniteiy more powerful than any individuality can be, and that a monarch's seeming strength is only effective so long as it interprets truly the accumulated impulse, that, in obedience to some harmonious law as yet uncoded, guides to their destiny the nations of the earth.

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